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indian philosophy in modern times



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ИНДИЙСКАЯ ФИЛОСОФИЯ НОВОГО ВРЕМЕНИ

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PREFACE

Indian philosophy and the history of Indian philosophy are considered in this book from the positions of Marxism. What does that mean? To quote Lenin: "The whole spirit of Marxism, its whole system, demands that each proposition should be considered (α) only historically, (β) only in connection with others, (γ) only in connection with the concrete experience of history."[1]

This methodological principle of considering social facts and processes is a universal one and hence applies also to the study of philosophy.

Philosophy is one of the forms of social consciousness; it includes the conceptions of the general laws of being and cognition and of the relation of thought to being. The principal functions of philosophy are the cognitive, the worldview, the methodological, and the ideological. A *worldview* is interpreted as a historically shaped system of generalised views of the outside world, social life, and the attitude of man to this world and to himself; these views act as principles determining man's behaviour and the ways and methods of cognition of the world.

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[1] V. I. Lenin, "To Inessa Armand", *Collected Works*, Vol. 35, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1973, p. 250.

Application of the worldview principles to the process of cognition and transformation of reality is referred to as *methodology.*

Depending on man's attitude to the world, principles may be of philosophical, natural-scientific, religious, etc. nature. Under certain conditions, each of these groups of principles may form the basis of a specific worldview, that is, a worldview in the narrow sense of the term — a philosophical worldview, natural-scientific worldview, religious worldview, etc.

Philosophy differs from religion first and foremost in its cognitive function, that is, in the fact that it is *always*, in one way or another, *linked with the theoretical assimilation of the world.*

Theoretical assimilation of the world is taken to mean cognition of the objective laws of the development of nature, society, and thinking, and formulation of theories on the basis of such cognition. A theory is generalised experience, man's generalised practice — the practice of production and socio-historical activity. Theory emerges out of practice and on its basis, and its goal is serving practice and the enrichment of practice. The interconnection between theory and practice is expressed in the formula: theory without practice has no purpose, while practice without theory is blind. Thus generalisation of the experiences of the working class's revolutionary struggle formed the basis for the origin and development of the *theory of scientific socialism.*

Theoretical assimilation of the world is the mainline of human cognition.

Theoretical cognition expressed in precise terms whose truth is tested and proved by social practice is *scientific cognition.*

For instance, Marx and Engels stressed the basic difference between scientific and Utopian socialism in the following words:

"The theoretical conclusions of the Communists are in no way based on ideas or principles that have been invented, or discovered by this or that would-be universal reformer.

"They merely express, in general terms, actual relations springing from an existing class struggle, from a historical movement going on under our very eyes."[1]

The philosophical worldview was not scientific from its very emergence — it became so only with the development of dialectical and historical materialism. Before that, it went through a lengthy period of formation along with natural science and the natural-scientific worldview, which is also always *theoretically substantiated.* Philosophical and scientific cognition are closely interconnected, but they are distinct and absolutely independent forms of theoretical assimilation of the world by man. They can be neither divorced from nor identified with each other, and neither can they be in relations of domination or subordination to each other. In the course of the history of philosophy, however, these concepts have been subjected to all of these distortions. Thus the authors of certain natural-philosophical systems, such as Paul Holbach (1723-1789), the French materialist, or the German idealist Hegel (1770-1831) declared philosophy to be the science of sciences. They believed that natural philosophy could (and had to)

[1] Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party", in: Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1976, p. 498.

read all the riddles of being independently from natural science and socio-historical practice. As Engels wrote, the historical limitations of natural philosophy lay in "putting in place of the real but as yet unknown interconnections ideal, fancied ones, filling in the missing facts by figments of the mind and bringing the actual gaps merely in imagination"[1].

Natural philosophy represents one of the extremes, the other one being *positivism.* Positivists (such as the French philosopher and sociologist Auguste Comte (1798-1857), or Herbert Spencer (1820-1903), the English philosopher and sociologist, adhering to the so-called positive knowledge, declared philosophy to be unnecessary as having no proper subject matter, for science, they believed, had ever been and would ever be philosophy unto itself.

The actual history of philosophy and of science is the history of theoretic assimilation of the world by man. Philosophy and science are two kinds of theoretical cognition.[2]

Science provides empirical data for philosophy, and philosophy helps science in the solution of general theoretical questions. It is not accidental, therefore, that the natural scientists of the 17th through 19th centuries usually referred to the general theoretical questions of their science

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[1] Frederick Engels, "Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy", in Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 3, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1970, p. 364.

[2] Philosophy is a science. But it is a special science studying the *most general* laws of nature, society, and thinking. That is why its main social functions are best considered in comparison with the particular sciences.

as philosophical ones. Carolus Linnaeus (1707-1778) called his classification of plants the philosophy of botany (*philosophia botanica*). Jean Baptiste de Lamarck (1744-1829) entitled his work on the theory of evolution *Philosophie zoologique.* Isaac Newton (1642-1727) called physics the philosophy of nature.

But the philosophical scientific worldview differs from the natural-scientific one in that it is based on the *most general* principles, synthesising the *most general* views expressed in the *most general* categories.

The philosophical world view does not coincide with any single science or form of social consciousness, neither is it restricted to any particular area of human activity. It generalises the data of all branches of knowledge, including natural science, but that generalisation is not of an elementary kind, involving as it does interpretation of these data from definite philosophical positions, materialist or idealist.

It is also important to bear in mind that philosophy is no mere agglomeration of certain views and conceptions of the outside world and man's attitude to it. To be included in a world-view system, these views and conceptions should be mediated through man's personal experience, thus acquiring a certain emotional colouring and becoming a firm conviction, a definite personal attitude regulating this individual's practical and cognitive activity.

The personal nature of human emotions is expressed in generalised form in any philosophical world view. Lenin wrote that "there has never been, nor can there be, any human *search*

for truth without "human emotions"'.[1] That is why philosophers do not just discuss certain questions, explaining and interpreting the objects and phenomena of the objective world — they also feel and struggle and believe, defending certain things and condemning others, i. e. propagating a text coloured with definite social emotions.

In a socially heterogeneous society, the worldview is in its very essence necessarily of class and party nature. Depending on whether or not the practical interests of a class coincide with the objective tendencies of the historical process, the party spirit of the given class coincides with scientific objectivity or deviates from it. Correspondingly, the worldview of the given class is formed as scientific, progressive, and revolutionary, or as unscientific, backward, and reactionary.

Philosophy is closely linked with *ideology* — a system of ideas and views expressing the position and needs of a definite class, social group, or the whole of society, and acting as a guideline for social action. Philosophy performs a similar function.

Modern bourgeois philosophers negate (or try to camouflage) the ideological function of philosophy, spreading the idea of non-party and supra-class spirit of philosophical thought.

In reality, however, the struggle between various philosophical schools and currents, the struggle between materialism and idealism, as Lenin emphasised on more than one occasion, "in the last analysis reflects the tendencies and ideology of

[1] V. I. Lenin, "Book Review. N. A. Rubakin, *Among Books*, Vol. II. Nauka Publishers, Moscow, 1913...", *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1977, p. 260.

the antagonistic classes in modern society".[1]

The Fundamental Question of Philosophy and Its Two Aspects. In terms of the philosophical worldview, the world (matter or nature) is everything that exists outside of and independently from man, while man is part of this world. But man is a very special part of it, one that thinks and cognises the whole of which it is a part and transforms it in accordance with its own social nature and the level of knowledge acquired. The relation between this "part" and "whole" determines, in the final analysis, the entire specificity of philosophical problems: the relation between being and thinking, between object and subject, matter and consciousness, nature and spirit, nature and society, society and man, etc.

"The great basic question of all philosophy, especially of more recent philosophy, is that concerning the relation of thinking and being...", wrote Engels. "The answers which the philosophers gave to this question split them into two great camps. Those who asserted the primacy of spirit to nature ... comprised the camp of idealism. The others, who regarded nature as primary, belong to the various schools of materialism.

"These two expressions, idealism and materialism, originally signify nothing else but this....

"But the question of the relation of thinking and being has yet another side: in what relation do our thoughts about the world surrounding us stand to this world itself? Is our thinking capable of the cognition of the real world? Are we able in our ideas and notions of the real world to

[1] V. I. Lenin, "Materialism and Empirio-Criticism", *Collected Works*, Vol. 14, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1977, p. 358.

produce a correct reflection of reality?... The overwhelming majority of philosophers give an affirmative answer to this question."[1]

The fundamental question of philosophy is no figment of the imagination — it was formulated on the basis of study of the entire history of philosophical thought and human activity. Any act of human consciousness involves a delimitation between the subject (he who cognises) and the object (that which is cognised); that is, the relations between the spiritual (consciousness, thinking, the psychical) and the material (nature, the surrounding world) exist in real life regardless of human consciousness, objectively. These relations, however, are realised and interpreted by man in different ways — either materialistically or idealistically. Materialists insist that the spiritual is the product of the material. Idealists, on the contrary, assume that the material is the product of the spiritual.

If we approach materialism and idealism from the standpoint of the *first aspect* of the basic question of philosophy, both of them are monistic in character. *Monism* (from Gr. *monos*, "one", "only") signifies an unambiguous solution of the basic question of philosophy; either matter or spirit is recognised as the primary principle. Monism in philosophy is opposed to the *dualist* worldview. *Dualism* (from L. *dualis* "dual") recognises two primary principles, the material and the spiritual. Matter and spirit, according to dualism, are substances independent from and opposed to each other, ones that cannot be reduced to each other. In ancient India, dualism was represented in the

[1] Frederick Engels, "Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy", in: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 3, pp. 345-346.

Samkhya philosophical school by Kapila (c. 6th-5th centuries B. C.), Isvara Misra (3rd-4th centuries C. E.), and others.

Along with the material substance (*prakrti*), these thinkers recognised the spiritual one (*purusa*), which, although it is involved in the circle of worldly existence, exists and acts quite independently.

A major representative of dualism in Europe was the French philosopher and mathematician René Descartes (1596-1650). Descartes wrote that two isolated substances were the basis of all bases — the *material* one (its principal property was extension) and the *spiritual* one (its principal property being thinking).

Dualism proved to be a dry and fruitless branch in the history of philosophy, its development bringing no positive results. Materialism and idealism remain the two main philosophical worldviews. The nearly three-thousand-year-long history of philosophy is the history of the philosophical cognition of the world in the struggle between materialism and idealism. History has known four main forms of materialism: (1) the spontaneous naive materialism of the ancient philosophers; (2) the metaphysical materialism of the thinkers of the 16th, 17th, 18th, and the first half of the 19th century; (3) the materialism of the revolutionary democrats of the 19th century; (4) dialectical materialism — the highest form of modern materialism.

Idealism exists in two basic forms, *objective* and *subjective*. Throughout many centuries, each of these two kinds of idealism took various forms.

Objective idealists proceed from the assumption that the spiritual (the world spirit, the world reason,

the world will, etc.) exists outside of and independently from human consciousness and nature. The spirit creates nature, determining and directing its existence and development.

Subjective idealists, on the other hand, assume that the objects and phenomena which we see, hear, feel, etc., depend on our sense perceptions, being combinations of our sensations: In other words, they negate the outside world's objective existence, recognising sensations and individual consciousness to be the only reality. "Being means being perceived," say subjective idealists. If this view is taken to its logical conclusion, the following result is inevitable: I alone exist, everything that surrounds me is no more than the product of my consciousness. In philosophy, this position is referred to as *solipsism* (from L. *solus*, "one", "only" and *ipse* "myself"). The question arises: what existed before we came into being? In other words, did nature exist before man? It is enough to formulate this question to see the absurdity of solipsism. Realising this, subjective idealists somehow try to make ends meet. George Berkeley said, for instance, that when man did not exist, there was God. But that means sliding openly to the positions of objective idealism.

The second aspect of the basic question of philosophy is the problem of knowability of the world. There is no unity among philosophers on this problem either. Some of them believe that the world is cognisable, others, that it is not. The philosophical doctrine according to which the world is unknowable is called *agnosticism* (from Gr. *a* "not" and *gnosis* "knowledge"). Lenin wrote: "The agnostic says: *I do not know* if there is an objective reality which is reflected, imaged by our

sensations; I declare there is no way of knowing this..."[1]

In dialectical materialism, the principle of the knowability of the world is substantiated by the data of natural science and man's socio-historical practice.

Philosophy emerged at the end of the second millennium B. C. Its historical development has been complicated and contradictory; it has been organically linked with all the aspects of the life and struggle of the peoples, of various social groups, classes, and states. It involved changes in the range of philosophical problems, the subject matter of philosophy, and the views of the social function and significance of philosophy in human life.

Despite the variety and specificity of these changes, the general characteristic features of all philosophical doctrines of different peoples and times can be singled out — the problems of being, cognition, and of human life. Philosophy expresses the social interests and ideology of various classes and social groups. The struggle between materialism and idealism is therefore always filled with concrete historical content and endowed with specific forms, depending on the epoch and the type of socio-economic formation.

In the present epoch, the main opponents on the philosophical front are, on one side, Marxist-Leninist philosophy (dialectical and historical materialism), and on the other, modern bourgeois philosophy consisting of various schools and currents with subjective and objective idealist content.

Many modern bourgeois philosophers attempt to

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[1] V. I. Lenin, "Materialism and Empirio-Criticism", *Collected Works*, Vol. 14, p. 128.

eliminate the basic question of philosophy, declaring it to be nonexistent and thus "rising above" materialism and idealism and creating a "new" (third) line in philosophy. It appears, however, that they have not and could not create a new philosophy, merely camouflaging their idealist essence with the help of new terms like "element", "essential coordination", "introjection", etc., and directing their critique against dialectical materialism (see Lenin's work *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*).

What is the explanation for the prolonged and implacable struggle around the basic question of philosophy? The reason is that this question is most intimately connected with man's practical activity. Depending on its solution, men form their concepts of social life, historical events, etc.

The conceptions (views, world outlook), in their turn, affect men's behaviour, elucidating, programming, and regulating their socio-historical activity, their practice. Idealism is a convenient and advantageous worldview for the exploiting and reactionary classes, that is, for those who are to blame for the ruin and poverty of the working masses, for the capitalists who adhere to the policy of robbing the peoples and of waging destructive wars. Indeed, if the idea or spirit is primary, i.e., if it determines the content and direction of everything that is, it follows that the source of all social evils should be sought for in men's spiritual life rather than in the conditions of society's material life and economic structure.

The Class and Epistemological Roots of Idealism. Philosophy has its social roots, that is to say, its origin is in all cases conditioned by certain socio-historical processes. In class society, the social roots are reflected in the worldview of a definite class.

It should not be simplistically assumed, however, that the views of a given philosopher are always *directly* linked with his class membership. In reality, these links are mediated in character. Throughout the many centuries of the history of human society the following tendency or law has made itself felt: materialism is the theory which reflects the most progressive tendencies of social development. As a rule, materialism has been the worldview of the progressive revolutionary classes as opposed to idealism and religion, which have ever been the ideological weapon of the reactionary classes. But this has not always been the case. For example, in mid-17th-century England the bourgeois revolution was prepared and carried out under the banner of Calvinism (the Protestant sect founded by Calvin). The reason for that was that under the domination of clerical ideology as the official worldview of feudal society, the struggle against feudalism and its ideology inevitably had to assume religious colouring.

Philosophical materialism is powerfully affected by natural science acting as one of the motive forces of its development. Engels wrote that "during this long period from Descartes to Hegel and from Hobbes to Feuerbach, the philosophers were by no means impelled, as they thought they were, solely by the force of pure reason. On the contrary, what really pushed them forward most was the powerful and ever more rapidly onrushing progress of natural science and industry. Among the materialists this was plain on the surface."[1]

From the standpoint of epistemology, materialism is marked by the intention to reflect the world the

[1] Frederick Engels, "Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy", in: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 3, pp. 347-348.

way it is in reality. The question may arise, and how could it be different? We must perceive (cognise or reflect) the outside world precisely the way it is in reality. If we approach the world in a different way, the way idealists do, nothing but confusion and absurd fantasy will result in our reasoning. Idealism is in this case nothing but stuff and nonsense which have to be discarded. This view of idealism is at first glance natural and correct, but at first glance only. Lenin wrote: "Philosophical idealism is *only* nonsense from the standpoint of crude, simple, metaphysical materialism. From the standpoint of *dialectical* materialism, on the other hand, philosophical idealism is a *one-sided*, exaggerated, überschwengliches (Dietzgen) development (inflation, distension) of one of the features, aspects, facets of knowledge into an absolute, *divorced* from matter, from nature, apotheosised. Idealism is clerical obscurantism. True. But philosophical idealism is ('*more correctly*' and '*in addition*') *a road* to clerical obscurantism *through* **one of the shades** of the infinitely *complex knowledge* (dialectical) of man."[1]

Further Lenin points out that cognition does not follow a straight line but rather a curve infinitely approximating a series of circles, a spiral. Any segment or bit of this curved line can be transformed into an independent, whole, straight line leading into a mire and religious obscurantism, in which it is fixed by the class interest of the dominant classes.

Let us consider subjective idealists, for example. George Berkeley and Ernst Mach abstract the

[1] V. I. Lenin, "On the Question of Dialectics", *Collected Works*, Vol. 38, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1981, p. 361.

subject's sensations and notions from the process of cognition, turning them into independent essences, while neo-Kantians do the same with logical thinking, pragmatists, with the useful side of men's practical activity, considering all phenomena, truth included, only in terms of their usefulness for the given subject, etc.

Lenin writes: "Rectilinearity and one-sidedness, woodenness and petrification, subjectivism and subjective blindness — *voilà* the epistemological roots of idealism."[1] These epistemological roots or sources are, of course, merely the possibility of idealism. This possibility is transformed into reality under the conditions of a definite social environment. The ultimate and decisive social cause of the origin of idealism is the division of society into antagonistic classes, the emergence of exploitation of man by man, class struggle, and separation of mental from physical labour.

The Problem of Method in Philosophy. Dialectics and Metaphysics. The word dialectics comes from the ancient Greek word *dialegomai* which means "to conduct a conversation, an argument, or polemics". This term has been used in various meanings in the history of philosophy. Socrates (469-399 B. C.) interpreted dialectics as the art of getting at the truth through discovery of contradictions in the opponent's propositions. For Plato (427-347 B. C.), dialectics was the art of conducting debate, of formulating questions and obtaining answers to them. Kant (1724-1804) called dialectics the logic of appearance which does not lead to truth. For Hegel (1770-1831), dialectics was the theory of the self-movement of concepts.

[1] *Ibid.*

In Marxism, dialectics is the theory and method of cognition of reality, the science of the most general laws of development of nature, society, and thinking.

Before Marxism, three main forms of dialectics existed.

(1) The naive spontaneous dialectics of the ancient thinkers. This type of dialectics was represented, for instance, by the materialist philosopher Heraclitus (6th century B. C.), who added to the idea of the world's materiality the idea of the motion and change of matter as a necessary and natural process. Lenin wrote: "This is naïvely and delightfully expressed in the famous formula (or aphorism) of Heraclitus: it is impossible to bathe twice in the same river."[1]

(2) The idealist dialectics of German philosophy of the late 18th and the first half of the 19th century.

Hegel was the most outstanding representative of this form of dialectics.

Hegel took the principle of development as the basic one in explaining all phenomena. He wrote that all that surrounded us could be regarded as a sample of dialectics. We know that all that is finite is mutable and transitory, and that is precisely the dialectics of the finite, by which the latter must transcend that which it is in its immediacy, passing into its opposite. Proceeding from an objective-idealist view of the basic question of philosophy, Hegel showed that contradictions were the source of movement in development. However, development is, in Hegel's view, the self-development of the idea or

[1] V. I. Lenin, "Conspectus of Lassalle's Book *The Philosophy of Heraclitus the Obscure of Ephesus*", *Collected Works*, Vol. 38, p. 343.

spirit. As for matter, it is inert, motionless, and uncontradictory, being the product of the spirit. Contradictions, interpreted as contradictions of the spirit or idea, are inherent in all phenomena and processes; they are the vital force of all that is, according to Hegel. The idea of dialectical development was perceived as the "rational kernel" of Hegel's dialectics by Marx and Engels.

(3) The dialectics of the revolutionary democrats.

The revolutionary democrats (such as Herzen, Belinsky, Chernyshevsky, Dobrolyubov, and others in Russia) came right up to a new form of dialectics — materialist dialectics. The materialism of the Russian revolutionary democrats took shape under the conditions of the peasant revolution that was coming to a head in Russia. But the peasantry was never a consistently revolutionary class. The revolutionary democrats, being the ideologues of the Russian peasant revolution, went beyond the limitations of metaphysical materialism, but they could not attain the level of dialectical materialism. According to Lenin, "Herzen came right up to dialectical materialism, and halted — before historical materialism."[1] "Chernyshevsky did not succeed in rising, or, rather, owing to the backwardness of Russian life, was unable to rise, to the level of the dialectical materialism of Marx and Engels."[2]

The characteristic feature of the dialectics of the revolutionary democrats was its links with the tasks of the revolutionary struggle for the elimina-

[1] V. I. Lenin, "In Memory of Herzen", *Collected Works*, Vol. 18, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1973, p. 26.

[2] V. I. Lenin, "Materialism and Empirio-Criticism", *Collected Works*, Vol. 14, p. 361.

tion of serfdom in Russia and for renovation of the forms of social life. For them, dialectics was "the algebra of the revolution" (Herzen), a method of theoretical substantiation and practical action in the struggle for a better future.

The dialectical method of Marx and Engels is an outstanding scientific discovery. The Marxist dialectical method organically combines dialectics and materialism. Marx and Engels critically revised and developed Hegel's idealist dialectics. But that does not at all mean that the dialectical methods of Marx and Hegel are identical.

"My dialectic method," wrote Marx, "is not only different from the Hegelian, but is its direct opposite. To Hegel, the life-process of the human brain, *i.e.*, the process of thinking, which, under the name of 'the Idea', he even transforms into an independent subject, is the demiurgus of the real world, and the real world is only the external, phenomenal form of 'the Idea'. With me, on the contrary, the ideal is nothing else than the material world reflected by the human mind, and translated into forms of thought.... With him it is standing on its head. It must be turned right side up again, if you would discover the rational kernel within the mystical shell."[1] The consistent nature of the dialectical materialism of Marx and Engels directly expresses the truly consistent revolutionary spirit of the proletariat.

The Marxist dialectical method is a scientific method of cognition and revolutionary transformation of social life. Lenin referred to dialectics as the living soul of Marxism.

[1] Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1974, p. 29.

He revealed the content of materialist dialectics as the theory of development in the following words: "A development that repeats, as it were, stages that have already been passed, but repeats them in a different way, on a higher basis ('the negation of negation'), a development, so to speak, that proceeds in spirals, not in a straight line; a development by leaps, catastrophes, and revolutions; 'breaks in continuity'; the transformation of quantity into quality; inner impulses towards development, imparted by the contradiction and conflict of the various forces and tendencies acting on a given body, or within a given phenomenon, or within a given society; the interdependence and the closest and indissoluble connection between *all* aspects of any phenomenon (history constantly revealing ever new aspects), a connection that provides a uniform, and universal process of motion, one that follows definite laws — these are some of the features of dialectics."[1]

The philosophical method opposed to dialectics is called metaphysics.

The term "metaphysics" appeared under rather curious circumstances. The Alexandrian librarian Andronicus of Rhodes (the lst century B. C.) divided Aristotle's works into two principal parts according to their content. The first part, which he called Physics, contained works on problems of natural science, the physical nature. The second part, which followed Physics (Gr. *meta ta physika* literally means "after physics"), included the works on problems of philosophy. Since then, the term "metaphysics" has been used in philosophical litera-

[1] V. I. Lenin, "Karl Marx", *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1974, p. 54.

ture as the synonym for "philosophy". True, this form acquired different semantic shadings and went through all kinds of semantic changes in various countries and epochs. However, throughout many centuries (up to the 19th; and in some cases even nowadays) it has been used by some authors as equivalent to the term "philosophy". In Hegel's works, and later in the works of Marx, Engels and Lenin, the term "metaphysics" came to be used to designate the method directly opposed to dialectics.

The fundamental differences between dialectics and metaphysics are clearly seen if we compare their attitude to the objects and phenomena of the outside world, of nature.

(1) In dialectics, nature is an integral whole in which all objects and phenomena are interlinked, interdependent, and interconditioned.

In metaphysics, nature is viewed as a random agglomeration of objects and phenomena isolated from one another.

(2) In dialectics, nature is always in a state of continual motion and change, of renovation and development.

In metaphysics, nature is presented as being always in a state of rest and immobility, of stagnation and immutability.

(3) In dialectics, the process of development is the unity of continuity and discontinuity, transition from insignificant and latent quantitative changes to open, fundamental, and qualitative changes.

In metaphysics, motion and development are no more than growth in which quantitative changes do not result in qualitative ones. The metaphysician exaggerates the stability of the objects and phenomena of the world, their repetitiveness, relative independence, etc.

(4) In dialectics, all objects and phenomena of nature without exception are inherently contradictory, all of them have negative and positive aspects, their past and future, something that is withering away and is born and develops anew.

In metaphysics, contradictions are "unnatural", that is, they are regarded as "deviations" from the normal state of objects and phenomena.

It was no mere accident that metaphysical thinking emerged and came to dominate the philosophical scene for such a long time: it happened of necessity, in accordance with the laws of cognition of the surrounding world by man. Engels wrote: "When we consider and reflect upon nature at large or the history of mankind or our own intellectual activity, at first we see the picture of an endless entanglement of relations and reactions..., in which nothing remains what, where and as it was, but everything moves, changes, comes into being and passes away... This primitive, naive but intrinsically correct conception of the world is that of ancient Greek philosophy, and was first clearly formulated by Heraclitus: everything is and is not, for everything *is fluid*, is constantly changing, constantly coming into being and passing away.

"But this conception, correctly as it expresses the general character of the picture of appearances as a whole, does not suffice to explain the details of which this picture is made up, and so long as we do not understand these, we have not a clear idea of the whole picture. In order to understand these details we must detach them from their natural or historical connection and examine each one separately, its nature, special causes, effects, etc... The analysis of nature into its individual parts, the grouping of the different natural processes and objects in definite clas-

ses, the study of the internal anatomy of organic bodies in their manifold forms — these were the fundamental conditions of the gigantic strides in our knowledge of nature that have been made during the last four hundred years. But this method of work has also left us as a legacy the habit of observing natural objects and processes in isolation, apart from their connection with the vast whole; of observing them in repose, not in motion, as constants, not as essentially variables; in their death, not in their life. And when this way of looking at things was transferred by Bacon and Locke from natural science to philosophy, it begot the narrow, metaphysical mode of thought peculiar to the last century."[1]

Pre-Marxian materialism, though it anticipated certain dialectical ideas, was as a rule linked with the metaphysical mode of reasoning, while dialectics was usually evolved on idealist soil. On the other hand, it should be borne in mind that in its epistemological essence, metaphysics is more inclined (and leads the researcher) towards idealism, while dialectics, towards materialism. As Lenin wrote,

"intelligent [i. e. dialectical — *V. B.*] idealism is closer to intelligent materialism than stupid materialism",[2] that is, metaphysical materialism. We know from the history of philosophy that metaphysics led materialist philosophers to idealist interpretations of some of the most essential problems, such as the source of the origin and development of the world, the laws of social

[1] Frederick Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1978, pp. 30-31.

[2] V. I. Lenin, "Conspectus of Hegel's Book *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*", *Collected Works*, Vol. 38, p. 274.

development, the essence of man, etc. The cognitive process itself contains premises for lifting certain concepts and propositions to metaphysical absolutes. Lenin writes: "Primitive idealism: the universal (concept, idea) is a *particular being*. This appears wild, monstrously (more accurately, childishly) stupid.... The approach of the (human) mind to a particular thing, the taking of a copy (= a concept) of it *is not* a simple, immediate act, a dead mirroring, but one which is complex, split into two, zig-zag-like, which *includes in it* the possibility of the flight of fantasy from life; more than that: the possibility of the *transformation* (moreover, an unnoticeable transformation, of which man is unaware) of the abstract concept, idea, into a *fantasy* (in letzter Instanz = God)."[1] As for dialectics, it led idealist philosophers to materialism. In his marginal notes on the works of the idealist dialectician Hegel, Lenin remarks: "Subtle and profound!", "The germs of historical materialism in Hegel."[2] Lenin's comment on the chapter on "Absolute Ideas" in Hegel's book *The Science of Logic* is this: "The sum total, the last word and essence of Hegel's logic is the *dialectical method* — this is extremely noteworthy. And one thing more: in this *most idealistic* of Hegel's works there is the *least* idealism and the *most materialism*. 'Contradictory', but a fact!"[3]

In Lenin's view, dialectics is the epistemological premise of consistent materialism.

[1] V. I. Lenin, "Conspectus of Aristotle's Book *Metaphysics*", *Collected Works*, Vol. 38, p. 370.

[2] V. I. Lenin, "Conspectus of Hegel's Book *The Science of Logic*", *Collected Works*, Vol. 38, pp. 98, 189.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 233.

We have thus given a general characteristic of philosophy stressing that:

— philosophy is a special form of social consciousness studying the most general laws of being and cognition and the relation of thinking to being;

— it performs the cognitive, worldview-forming, methodological, and ideological functions. In class society philosophy has a party quality, for it expresses the interests of the struggling classes of society;

— its development is ultimately conditioned by the needs of society's material life;

— it is divided into two main opposing directions, materialism and idealism, continually waging a struggle with each other which in the last analysis reflects the struggle of the classes of antagonistic formations;

— philosophical materialism as a rule expresses the worldview of the progressive classes of society, while idealism mostly, though not always, is the ideological weapon of the reactionary classes;

— philosophical idealism always supports and defends religion, fighting against materialism and science;

— idealism has its class and epistemological roots;

— the history of philosophy is in the first place a history of the emergence and development of the basic philosophical directions — materialism and idealism, and of their mutual struggle;

— the history of philosophy includes the history of the emergence and development of dialectics and metaphysics, of their mutual struggle inalienably linked with the confrontation of the main philosophical trends;

— the development of materialist philosophy is closely linked with the advancement of natural science.

We have outlined here the scientific view of philosophy, of its subject matter and role in society in order to prove, and later in the text of the book to demonstrate,

first, that Indian philosophy is no "supernatural" phenomenon and that its functions do not extend beyond the sphere of the objective laws of social development;

second, that the scientific approach to the history of philosophy permits an understanding of the genuine essence, and an appreciation of the real extent of the contribution made by each nation to the treasury of world culture and social thought including philosophical culture and thought;

third, that the scientific approach to philosophy permits a demonstration of the untenability and unscientific and reactionary quality of the bourgeois nationalistic conceptions of "Europocentrism" and "Asiatic centrism", or the division of nations into "advanced" and "backward", "progressive" and "stagnating", "philosophical" and "unphilosophical", etc.

The task of the present study is to elucidate some of the main points of the history of Indian philosophical and sociological thought of the modern times. It goes without saying that we shall be mainly concerned with progressive thought facilitating the historical development of both the nation and human society as a whole.

It is necessary to destroy the myth of the alleged inadequacy of Indian philosophical and sociological thought, of its "one hundred per cent" idealism and religious mysticism, stagnation and pessimism. It is a well-known fact that in the past two hundred years the colonisers distorted and belittled the culture of the great Indian people in every possible way,

endeavouring, moreover, to exterminate the progressive cultural traditions from the consciousness of the masses. That is exactly why the most absurd and distorted information of Indian philosophical and sociological thought spread in Europe.

It has become a kind of tradition with some British and American scholars to clothe Indian philosophical thought in mysticism, considering it mostly in its religious aspects and even identifying it with religious thought. The theoretical sources of this tradition are quite old. It was Hegel who wrote: "What we refer to as Eastern philosophy is, generally speaking, to a much greater extent a religious mode of perception and a religious worldview of the Oriental peoples which can easily be mistaken for philosophy..."[1] The American philosopher William T. Harris (1835-1909) in his numerous works characterises Indian philosophy as negative absolutism, abstractionism and nihilism. This view has proved to be extremely tenacious and still has some adherents. In 1957, a bulky collection of texts of Vedic literature translated from Sanskrit was published in Princeton (USA). Characteristically, the book contains texts mostly of religious content.

Finally, a conception is widely current among defenders of colonialism that the peoples of colonial and dependent countries are in general incapable of "genuine" and independent philosophical thinking. In short, "the West tried its best to persuade India that its philosophy is absurd, its art puerile, its poetry uninspired, its

[1] *G. W. F. Hegel's Werke. Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie*, Verlag von Duncker und Humblot, Berlin, 1933, Vol. 13, S. 135.

religion grotesque and its ethics barbarous..."[1]

The reactionary political orientation of bourgeois history of philosophy is closely linked with its methodological defects. Treating history idealistically, bourgeois scholars ignore the material basis of the life of society. In their opinion, the development of philosophical views and theories and of ideology in general is independent of the social basis. This methodological defect is also characteristic of bourgeois scholars of the liberal type and of the entire so-called traditional historical-philosophical thought in India itself.

Undoubtedly, the traditional studies in the history of Indian philosophy have a certain scholarly value. A great number of original texts and of their translations into the modern Indian and European languages have been published, many chronological dates have been fixed, various philosophical schools and trends analysed, terminological difficulties overcome, etc.

No less traditional, however, are the methodological defects of these studies. For example, there is a characteristic tendency to represent Indian philosophy as a single whole, as a totality of the philosophical theories of all the Indian thinkers, both ancient and modern, Hindu and non-Hindu, theists and atheists, in which "we feel the kindred throb of the human heart, which because human is neither Indian nor European..."[2]. Philosophy is in this context viewed as a manifestation or property of an invariable spirit of the whole Indian people. "Philosophy in India," writes S. Radhakrishnan, "is essentially spiritual. It is the intense

[1] S. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London, 1977, p. 779.

[2] S. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, p. 8.

spirituality of India, and not any great political structure or social organisation that it has developed, that has enabled it to resist the ravages of time and the accidents of history..."[1].

Many bourgeois philosophers in Europe and America present the history of Indian philosophy in the same light. Thus, Prof. Theos Bernard, the author of the book *Hindu Philosophy*, asserts that the principal schools of Indian philosophy recognise one and the same Ultimate Reality (or substance), but each of them takes its own view of this substance: Nyaya and Vaisesika search for the means of cognising it, Samkhya studies its "cosmic evolution", and Yoga, "the individual aspect of the system laid down by the Samkhya doctrine".[2] The basic idea of the book is that Indian philosophy has been since ancient times concerned with invariable "eternal" ideas expressing the invariable "Indian spirit".

Thus the bourgeois tradition considers the history of philosophical thought in India as pure filiation of ideas in the sphere of the spirit rather than in its connection with the development of socio-economic formations and the history of the classes and class struggle in society. The schools and directions in Indian philosophy are divided into two camps, orthodox and unorthodox. The criterion for this division is the attitude to the Vedas. The philosophical systems recognising the authority of the Vedas comprise the camp of orthodox philosophy, those that do not recognise it, the camp of unorthodox philosophy. The struggle between materialism and idealism, between the

[1] S. Radhakrishnan, op. cit., pp. 24-25.

[2] Th. Bernard, *Hindu Philosophy*, Philosophical Library, New York, 1947, pp. 4, 5, 6.

historically progressive and reactionary trends is here shifted into the background, far from being the subject of consideration.

In the last few decades, a number of monographs on the history of Indian philosophy have been published. Of the books by Indian authors, the following are worthy of notice, first and foremost: the two-volume *Indian Philosophy* by Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, the former President of the Republic of India; the five-volume *A History of Indian Philosophy* by Surendranath Dasgupta; Suryanarayana Sastri's *Short History of Indian Materialism* in Sanskrit; Mysore Hiriyanna's *Outlines of Indian Philosophy; An Introduction to Indian Philosophy* by S. Chatterjee and D. Datta; *A History of Indian Philosophy* by Ram Mohan Roy.[1] The common feature of these works is that they are all written from the positions of idealist interpretation of history and are limited to the ancient and medieval periods of the history of Indian philosophy.

The situation is the same in the works of the Western historians of philosophy, where the whole of the history of Indian philosophy is essentially reduced to the history of the three unorthodox and six orthodox systems.[2]

The focus of the researchers' attention is the objective-idealist system of the Vedanta.[3] That is not

[1] Ram Mohan Roy is a progressive Indian historian of philosophy.

[2] See Friedrich Max Müller, *The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy*, Associated Publishing House, New Delhi, 1973; Th. Bernard, *Hindu Philosophy*, New York, 1947; H. R. Zimmer, *Philosophies of India*, London, 1951, etc.

[3] As a rule, the studies do not extend later than the views of Samkara (the 8th century C. E.) and Ramanuja (the 12th century C. E.).

accidental. Throughout many centuries, the Vedanta has been and still remains the worldview of the economically dominant classes of Indian society. For the same reason, the concept of the Vedanta is often used as a synonym for the general concept of "Indian philosophy" in the literature on the history of philosophy. At first glance, this fact may appear to be insignificant ("a terminological slip", "economy of thought", etc.), In reality, however, this signifies an attempt to represent the Vedanta as an all-Indian philosophy, that is, the kind of philosophy which accumulates or synthesises all the "Indian" viewpoints without exception, regardless of their class content.

This kind of "pro-Vedantism" in modern India is rather widespread. For instance, D. M. Datta, a well-known modern historian of philosophy, published a long article in *The Philosophical Review* in 1948, "The Contribution of Modern Indian Philosophy to World Philosophy". Speaking on behalf of all "the main trends of Indian thought", Datta in actual fact recounts the basic propositions of the Vedanta:

"The main trends of Indian thought which deserve special attention at this critical age of our planet are (1) its attempt to base philosophy on *all* aspects of experience and not simply on sense experience; (2) its practical insistence that philosophy is *for life* and must be lived in all its spheres, private, social, and international; (3) its emphasis on the necessity of controlling the body and mind, the necessity of moral purity and meditation, to make philosophical truths effective in life; (4) its recognition of the fundamental unity of all beings, particularly mankind, and the consequent consciousness that our moral or religious duties are

toward all, and not simply to the members of our own group, country, or race; (5) its conviction that the Ultimate Reality [i. e., Brahman.— *V. B.*] manifests itself or can be conceived, in different ways, and consequently that there are divergent paths to perfection *any one* of which can be adopted in accordance with one's inner inclination; (6) its belief that political freedom and material progress are necessary, but only as means to ultimate spiritual peace and perfection, so that they should be attained in ways not detrimental to the latter; and lastly (7) its contention that the ultimate aim of every individual should be to perfect himself with a view to raising the world to perfection."[1]

We shall show in the second part of this book that all that Datta said about "the main trends of Indian thought" is mostly characteristic of the Vedanta philosophy. At the same time this description of the Vedanta is one-sided. The fact is that within Vedantism itself, throughout the whole history of its existence, an unending struggle continues, now overt and at other times covert, between the progressive (that is, inclined towards democracy and materialism) and reactionary (essentially anti-democratic and inclined towards idealism and mysticism) trends or tendencies.

Ram Mohan Roy, Dayananda Sarasvati, Ramakrishna Parahamsa, Swami Vivekananda, Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Aurobindo Ghose all spoke on behalf of Vedantism. These thinkers represent the progressive line in the development of the

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[1] D. M. Datta, "The Contribution of Modern Indian Philosophy to the World Philosophy", *The Philosophical Review*, Vol. LVII, November 1948, pp. 571-572.

Vedanta philosophy. No less active in Vedantism were G. K. Gokhale and Dadabhoi Naoroji, S. Krishnavarma and J. Krishnamurti, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee and Abhedananda and many other liberals as well as reactionaries, defenders of everything that is bigoted and stagnant. All kinds of ideological collaborationists, anti-patriots, and enemies of democracy joined the ranks of the latter. Although all of these reactionary forces were heterogeneous in their composition and fought among themselves for consolidating their influence in the country, they tended more and more to unite in the face of the growing mass struggle against colonial domination, and were actively supported by the colonialists.

The progressive forces were not uniform either. For example, Vivekananda, the disciple and follower of Ramakrishna, differed so strongly from his teacher on the most essential points of his teaching, particularly in his sociological views, that they can hardly be said to be ideological allies. Suffice it to recall the fact that Ramakrishna suggested "intimidating" the colonisers and "hissing" at the enemies rather than fighting evil or returning evil for evil, whereas Vivekananda spoke sharply against the non-violence theory. If the ideal of non-violence were to be implemented, he said, that would result in a catastrophe, for the evil would take possession of our property and our lives and would deal with us as they pleased.

To take another example: Bal Gangadhar Tilak was active in the national liberation struggle and became the chief leader of the democratic wing of the Indian National Congress, while his ideological ally and comrade-in-arms Aurobindo Ghose voluntarily gave up his positions after World War I, withdrew from the battlefield, and escaped into

solitude, embracing the Yogi way of life, and later, in the 1930s, joined the ranks of reactionaries following the trend of the evolution of his socio-political views.

Our study is devoted to the history of modern Indian philosophy. We shall be obliged, however, to begin our exposition with an extensive excursus into the history of philosophy covering two periods — the ancient one and the early Middle Ages; this forms the first chapter, "Literature. Sources. Problems". The reason is that the theoretical sources of Indian philosophy of the 19th and early 20th century lie in remote antiquity. Almost the entire set of philosophical categories and terms, as well as an essential part of philosophical problems, have been inherited from antiquity. The part of the study devoted to the history of the older periods permits us to criticise, be it only in brief and on the most essential points, bourgeois historians of philosophy, in whose works Indian philosophical heritage was to a great extent mystified and distorted.

To make the exposition consecutive, and the reading of the main part of the work easier, we provide a short characteristic of the development of philosophical and sociological thought in India in the late 18th through mid-19th century (the period immediately preceding the one considered in the main part). That is the subject of the second chapter.

The second and main part of the monograph consists of two sections (comprising seven chapters) and a general conclusion. Section I studies the development of Indian philosophical and sociological thought at the time of the formation of the capitalist order and increased colonialist

oppression (the 1860s-1890s). Section II analyses the philosophical and sociological thought in India between 1900 and the end of the First World War.

Part One

Chapter 1. LITERATURE. SOURCES. PROBLEMS.

1. The Vedic Period (c. 15th-5th centuries B. C.)

This period is termed Vedic because throughout it the Vedic literature was the principal form of the development of the spiritual culture of the peoples of India. It is in the Vedas (lit. "knowledge") that we have the first records of the ancient Indians on problems of history, economics, religion, philosophy, ethics, aesthetics and many other subjects. Our characterisation of the Vedic literature will be mostly historico-philosophical in nature.

According to the established tradition, the whole of the Vedic literature is divided into four groups:

(1) the Samhitas,
(2) the Brahmanas,
(3) the Aranyakas,
(4) the Upanisads.

This division reflects the historical order in which this literature developed: the Samhitas are the most ancient, while the works of the other groups compiled in later times are commentaries and additions to the Samhitas. For this reason the Samhitas are referred to as the Vedas proper. In the broad sense, the Vedas comprise all four groups, the entire complex of the Vedic literature.

To have a correct conception of the structure of the Vedas, it is also necessary to take into account that not a single group of the Vedic literature is

an integral whole. The Samhitas are four collections — the Rig Veda, the Sama Veda, the Yajur Veda, and the Atharva Veda. Each Brahmana pertains to a certain Samhita: the Rig Veda has Brahmanas of its own, and the same is true of the Sama Veda and the other Vedas. The Aranyakas and the Upanisads directly adjoin either the Samhitas or the Brahmanas: any given Samhita or Brahmana has Upanisads and Aranyakas of its own. However, inasmuch as the Brahmanas have the Samhitas for their source, the Aranyakas and the Upanisads pertaining to them also adjoin the Samhitas. It follows that the whole structure of the Vedas is ultimately determined by the structure of the Samhitas. It is therefore sometimes said that the entire Vedic literature consists of four Vedas (the Rig Veda, the Sama Veda, the Yajur Veda, and the Atharva Veda) and each Veda, of four parts (the Samhitas, the Brahmanas, the Aranyakas, and the Upanisads). Thus the structure of the Vedas reflects both the original division into four Samhitas and the main stages of the historical development of the entire Vedic literature. Of greatest importance, however, is the historical principle.[1]

Let us consider in brief the epoch of the origin and development of the Vedas.

Although many valuable scholarly works have been written by Indologists over a very long period of time (some two and a half thousand years in India and about two centuries in Europe), many problems in the origin and dating of the Vedas remain unsettled. The literature on the Vedas, both old and new, contains widely varying data (from the 5th and even 6th to the middle of the first millennium B. C.). Most modern scholars believe, however, that the period of the Vedic literature covers about a thousand years between the middle of the second and the middle of the first millennium B. C.

In the second half of the second millennium B. C., a class society was being formed in the valley of the river Ganges and the areas adjoining it in the south and south-west. The question of what that society was like, concretely, is still open. Although slavery was widespread in India, it did not play a decisive role in the existing mode of production, as was the case in Ancient Greece and in Rome, for instance. The social structure in India at that time cannot therefore be unconditionally described as slave-owning. We know Marx's view of the existence of the Asiatic mode of production. The solution of the question at hand should be sought for in determining the concrete historical meaning of this concept, we believe.

As social inequality and class contradictions in India grew and deepened, the formerly free people with equal rights came to be divided into four groups or *varnas* (Brahmana, Ksatriya, Vaisya, and Sudra) differing in their social position, rights, and obligations. The brahmana *varna* consisted of priests, ksatriyas were mostly warriors, vaisyas, farmers, artisans, and traders. Sudra was the lowest group in the social organisation. The origin of the state in India apparently dates to this time, too.

Thus the thousand years in which the Vedic literature took shape are characterised by essential changes in the structure of the social life of ancient India. The stages of this development of ancient Indian society are reflected in the Vedas.

[1] All the Vedas have a Samhita, a Brahman, an Arnayak and Upanisads, but the author gives his own interpretation.— *Ed.*

The earliest and the largest of the Vedas is the Rig Veda ("the Veda of the hymns"; Rig means "laudatory verse", "ode", or "hymn"); it contains 1,028 hymns and more than 10,500 verses, the same as the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* taken together. It is divided into ten books, or *mandalas* (lit. "circle" or "cycle"). The Rig Veda hymns are laudatory verses addressed mostly to the gods personifying the forces or phenomena of nature. In the 11th and 10th centuries B. C. the separate groups of the Indo-Aryan tribes that penetrated India came to form a single community. Modern Vedic scholars believe that the hymns of these tribes took shape as the Rig Veda at the same time.

The Rig Veda hymns took form in the separate clans or tribes and their early redactions were apparently the product of collective creativity. The poets compiled the Rigs to praise the gods and the forces of nature. Natural phenomena were regarded as omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, and just divinities. People turned to them with their pleas and requests and offered them sacrifices. A person's life, well-being and happiness were thought to depend on these sacrifices.

Ancient Indians believed that a sacrifice accompanied by the appropriate hymn has magic force and can propitiate the gods. The hymns or the separate acts of sacrifice were distributed throughout the seasons, months, and hours of the day. Nature itself had cult elements ascribed to it: for instance, thunder was thought of as God India throwing his mace.

What was the first sacrifice? Who offered it? These questions are answered in the hymn to the *purusa* [X, 90]. *Purusa* is, according to the hymn, the personification of the cosmic principle, the "universal" man. He is the source of all the universe, of the present and future. The gods extracted from him, as it were, the cosmic worlds, the animal world, and men. Of particular interest are verses 11 and 12 of the hymn expounding the myth of the origin of the *varnas*: the brahmans, or priests, were made of the *purusa's* mouth, the ksatriya, or warriors, out of his arms, the vaisya, or peasants, shepherds and artisans, out of his thighs, and the sudra (the people without any rights serving the higher varnas), out of his feet.

Many centuries passed before the hymns compiled at different times and in different areas of India were collected in the books of the Samhitas. The compilers of the Rig Veda Samhita had the aim of preserving the hymns from distortion or oblivion; their purpose was in no way liturgical. Indications of this are the sheer volume of the collection and the diversity of the hymns, some of which have no bearing on religious service. In later practices the pronouncement of the holy hymns of the Rig Veda was combined with sacrificial rites (just as the reading of the *yajus* and *samans*[1]) and entrusted to the priest.

The legendary collectors of the hymns and compilers of the Vedas were called the *rishis* (poets or wise men). The *rishis* are not historical personages; they appear now as the authors of the hymns of the Vedic literature.

The Rig Veda hymns contain attempts of the

[1] *Yajus* — a sacrificial formula, dictum, or praise; *saman* — hymn.

ancient Indians to read the mysteries of being. The first sparks of philosophical thinking emerge in the living fabric of the myths and legends comprising the greater part of the Vedic literature. The authors of the hymns ask these questions: "Why does the sun not fall although it is not supported by anything or fixed to anything?", "Where is the sun by night?", "Where go the stars by day?", "Whence comes the wind, and whither goes it?", "Why does it raise no dust on celestial roads?" etc. Those were the first attempts to find cause-and-effect connections in nature.

The authors of the hymns refer to the existence of matter from which came (or out of which was made) the world surrounding man.[1] What was their conception of this matter?

"What was that tree, and what was that forest, out of which they [the gods] made the earth and the sky?" [X, 37] — there was no single answer given to this by the ancient wise men: the prime substance was believed to be air, or water, or fire, etc. [X, 72; X, 88; X, 121].

Of particular philosophical interest is hymn 129 from the 10th book of the Rig Veda, to which we shall refer as the cosmogonic hymn.[2] Let us quote the text of the hymn in full:

[1] According to some hymns, the initial matter produced out of itself the divine forces which in their turn built out of this initial substance nature and the whole world surrounding man as the carpenter builds the house.

[2] The Vedic hymns have no names. Some scholars call this hymn, from its content, the hymn of creation, while others, the Nasadiya hymn, from its beginning (*Nasad* means "there was not"). See Theodor Aufrecht, *Die Hymnen des Rigveda*, bei Adolph Marcus, Bonn, 1877, S. 430; S. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. 1, p. 101.

Then even nothingness was not, nor existence.
There was no air, nor the heaven beyond it.
What covered it? Where was it? In whose keeping?
Was there then cosmic water, in depths unfathomed?

Then there was neither death nor immortality,
Nor was there then the torch of night and day.
The One breathed windlessly and self-sustaining.
There was that One then, and there was no other.

At first was only darkness wrapped in darkness.
All there was only unlimited water.
The One who came to be enclosed in nothing,
Arose at last, born of the power of heat (tapas)[1]

In the beginning desire descended on it—
That was the primal seed, born of the mind.
The Sages who have scorched their hearts with wisdom

Know that which is kin to which is not.

And they have stretched their cord across the word,

And know what was above and what below.
Seminal powers made fertile mighty forces.
Below was strength, and over it was impulse.

[1] The concept of *tapas* which frequently occurs in the Upanisads originally meant "heat". By and by *tapas* came to mean in the course of time selfexhaustion for the sake of other beings and later a special kind of asceticism in general consisting not only in continence, tempering the body, etc., but also in self-contemplation and concentration of thought.

But, after all, who knows, and who can say,
Whence it all came, and how creation happened?
The gods themselves were later than creation,
So who knows truly whence it has arisen?

Whence all creation had its origin,
He, whether he fashioned it or whether he did
not,
He, who surveys it all from highest heaven,
He knows— or may be even he does not know.[1]

Thus the most elementary and primary state of all that is is, according to the authors of the hymn, something amorphous, undivided, and devoid of concrete content, and in this sense it cannot be said either to exist or not to exist: "There was then neither what is nor what is not." It is noteworthy that there is a tendency towards, or certain beginnings of, a spontaneous materialistic worldview, for the beginning of all beginnings here is matter, some "material" underlying all objects and phenomena of cosmic space. The One (Ekum) existed always, according to the hymns, it was not born of anything: that is the eternally existing of which everything is born — the entire universe, the sun, the earth, heaven, air, water, etc.

But where and what is that motive force through which the "indistinct" became "distinct", taking the definite forms of individual objects and phenomena? The authors of the hymn assert quite positively that the motive force is in the initial matter itself, it is inherent in it ("That One breathed by itself without breath", that is, without an external impetus, without an impact from some outside

[1] A. L. Basham; *The Wonder That Was India*, Rupa and Co., Delhi, 1971, pp. 249-50.

force). Is this not a profound insight that movement is the property of nature itself?

Neither do the authors of the hymn resort to the concept of outside impetus when they answer the question of the source of self-movement of the One ("What did it begin with?"). The first inner impulse which started the formation of the "world of differences" they call "desire" ("love" in the English translation.— *Tr.*):

"Love overcame it in the beginning, which was the seed springing from mind..."[1]

In the formation of nature, the original attributes of the One were: that which is and that which is not, top and bottom, night and day, death and immortality, etc. As for gods, they appeared later "the gods came later". At best, god "in the highest heaven" "knows whence it [the universe] arose", but that is doubtful too ("does even he not know?").

Thus the cosmogonic hymn of the Rig Veda is, in our view, fundamentally a realistic work with strong elements of spontaneous materialism and dialectics.

It stands to reason that we speak of the rudiments of materialistic worldview in the first place in the sense that the authors of the hymn view nature and understand it the way it is, without any outside additions. We therefore cannot concur with Prof. Radhakrishnan's interpretation of the catego-

[1] "Concupiscence", the desire to manifest itself, the first movement of conscious will, must precede action. The word used here is *kama*. It later came to mean "love" and became the name of the god of love. Similarly, Gr. *Eros* and L. *Cupido* literally mean "desire".

It is also important to note that thought ("the seed springing from the mind") is regarded in the hymn as a physical ability, that is, a property of matter rather than of spirit or soul.

ry of One mentioned in the hymn in the spirit of objective idealism: "The Nasadiya hymn ... makes nature and spirit both aspects of the one Absolute. The Absolute itself is neither the self nor the other, is neither self-consciousness of the type of I, nor unconsciousness of the type of not-I. It is higher than both these. It is a transcending consciousness. The opposition is developed within itself. According to this account the steps of creation, when translated into modern terms, are: (1) the Highest Absolute; (2) the bare self-consciousness, I am I; (3) the limit of self-consciousness in the form of another..."[1]

The hymn is here obviously modernised in a religious and idealist manner. We come across similar attempts in Max Müller,[2] S. Dasgupta, Aurobindo Ghose, and other bourgeois historians of Indian philosophy.

There are no grounds at all for ascribing such concepts as "the absolute" and "transcending consciousness" to the authors of the cosmogonic hymn. There could be no reference to these concepts in the hymn since divorcing consciousness from matter and raising it to an absolute preceding matter is an epistemological phenomenon characteristic of a later period of the development of philosophical thought. If we turn to similar cosmogonic hymns of other peoples and countries, we shall see that they bear no traces of objective idealism either.

For example, the Babylonian Hymn of Creation (*Enuma Elis*) dating approximately from the middle of the second millennium B. C., says that the original mass of matter contained a contradiction between two irreconcilable hostile forces, the forces of order and chaos. Because of this contradiction all that is was divided into earthly and celestial phenomena. The earthly and the celestial, interacting between themselves, in their turn fell into opposites: the animate and the inanimate, the divine and the non-divine, etc. The formation of world order is in this hymn presented in a mythical and concrete shape rather than abstractly or philosophically.

[1] S. Radhakrishnan, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 103.

[2] Friedrich Max Müller, *The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy.*

Another example. Let us recall Homer, Hesiod, and other representatives of pre-scientific thinking in Greece. Homer does not consider the origin of the world. In his view, one heaven, visible to us, exists, and one earth. The heaven surrounding earth consists of two parts, the higher (ether) and the lower (air). Lightning proves the existence of fire in heaven. Besides, there also exist earth and water. "We are all water and earth," says Homer. Hesiod (8th-7th cent. B. C.) was the first poet in ancient Greece to contemplate the origin of the universe in his *Works and Days, Theogony* etc., Hesiod says:

...First Chaos was; next ample-bosom'd Earth,
The seat immovable for evermore
Of those immortals, who the snow-topt heights
Inhabit of Olympus, or the glooms
Tartarean, in the broad-track'd ground's abyss.
Love, then, are most beautiful amongst
The deathless deities; restless he
Of every god and every mortal man
Unnerves the limbs; dissolves the wider breast
By reason steel'd, and quells the very soul.
From Chaos, Erebus and ebon Night:
From Night the Day sprang forth and shining air,

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Whom to the love of Erebus she gave.
Earth first produced the Heaven; whose starry cope,
Like to herself immense, might compass her
On every side, and be to blessed gods
A mansion unremoved for aye. She brought
The lofty mountains forth, the pleasant haunts
Of nymphs, who dwell 'midst thickets of the hills.
And next the sea, the swollen and chafing sea,
Apart from love's enchantment. Then, with Heaven
Consorting, Ocean from her bosom burst
With its deep-eddying waters...[1]

In conclusion let us recall a document that only recently became known to the Soviet scholarly circles. In the 16th century, when Spaniards invaded the territory which now forms Mexico and Guatemala, they encountered there a number of Indian tribes at a relatively high cultural stage. The Quiché tribe was discovered to have a book entitled *Popol-Vuh* ("the book of the community") which contained cosmogonic myths showing great resemblance to the Indian, Babylonian, and Greek ones. One of the hymns reads: "At the beginning, everything was in suspension... nothing had existence... There was only the calm sea and the sky in all its extension but empty. Only immobility, obscurity and silence existed. The gods were in water... Creation began. First emptiness filled itself, water retired and earth emerged out of it;

[1] Hesiod, *The Theogony*, translated by C. A. Elton, George Routledge and Sons Limited, London and New York, pp. 101-102.

mountains and valleys were formed; currents of water divided themselves, streams ran freely between hills, and the waters were separated when high mountains appeared..."[1]

Thus we see that cosmogonic mythical hymns are works of a historical period when philosophical thought made its first steps, and those steps were towards spontaneous materialism and dialectics.

Other Samhitas have a less independent significance than the Rig Veda. Thus, the second Samhita, the Sama Veda (the Veda of Songs), is a collection of melodies composed mostly for the verses of the Rig Veda: 1,474 verses of the 1,594 are already there in the Rig Veda. The third Samhita, the Yajur Veda (the Veda of Sacrifices), duplicates the Rig Veda to a considerable extent, too. The fourth Samhita, the Atharva Veda (the Veda of incantations), differs considerably from the rest. Its hymns are in the nature of incantations. According to the Vedic tradition, the first three Samhitas are regarded as the most "authoritative" and genuine Vedas. As for the Atharva Veda, it was, in the opinion of a number of scholars, composed later and in a different social environment. The Rig Veda speaks of the time of subjugation of non-Aryan tribes by the Aryans, while the Atharva Veda narrates of the time when the Aryan and non-Aryan ideals were confused, that is, the views of different peoples were synthesised.[2] The Atharva Veda may serve as the source for the study of the evolution of the

[1] *Filosofia y Letras*. Revista de la facultad de filosofia y letras. Tomo XXVIII, México, Nums. 55-56, 1954, pp. 179, 180.

[2] "The old title of the Atharva-Veda, 'Atharvangirasah', shows that there were two different strata in it, one of Atharvan

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philosophical and religious ideas throughout the first period of the Vedic literature.

The Brahmanas, that is, the books written by and for brahmans, are commentaries on the Samhitas. They are collections of instructions, or manuals, for the performance of rites prescribed for the master of a house. The Brahmanas contain a great many legends and historical lays pertaining to the social life of ancient Indian society. The Brahmanas are written in prose. Their emergence is due to the changed social conditions, and in the first place to increased social inequality, to the development of the *Varna* system. Besides, many of the Veda texts became incomprehensible in the course of time, the religious cult changed in many respects, and the ritual became much more complicated. Performing the duties of a priest became a profession. The significance of the sacrifices changed, too. Their purpose was no longer propitiating the gods but affecting humans through the sacrifice to the gods, directing their activities towards the performance of personal and social needs and norms of behaviour. Class differentiation of society gave rise to new social norms. For instance, the Satapatha Brahmana (II 5.2.6) says: "Varuna, doubtless, is the nobility, and the Maruts are the people; he thus makes the nobility superior (uttara) to the people; and hence people here serve the Kshatriya, placed above them... and the people being the nobleman's food..."

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and the other of Angiras. The former refers to auspicious practices used for healing purposes. The hostile practices belong to the Angirases. The first is medicine and the second is witchcraft, and the two are mixed up..." (S. Radhakrishnan, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 122).

Thus sacrifices and all kinds of rituals were now used to legalise and maintain the new social conditions and in the first place to regulate the relations between individuals belonging to the different *varnas*. Let us consider several fragments as an illustration.

The legend of the origin of the so-called ritual of the water grandson (Aitareya Brahmana II, 19) gives an idea of the social inequality in Indian society of the times. Kavasha was forbidden by the Brahman priests not only to participate in but also to be present at the sacrificial rite for the sole reason that he was the son of a slave woman. Kavasha was banished to the desert with the words: "How should the son of a slave-girl, a gamester, who is no Brahman, remain among us and become initiated...? ...he should die of thirst..." True, being persuaded of the great mental and spiritual gifts of Kavasha, later the Brahman priests declared him to be a favourite of the gods and counted him among their own, the fraternity of the wise. Kavasha is believed to be the author of hymns some of which were included in the tenth book of the Rig Veda.

The Aitareya Brahmana (VII.29) places the accent on the fact that the sudras serve the three upper castes (the ksatriyas, the brahmanas, and the vaisyas). The ritual details are now arranged in such a manner as to show, for instance, that a ksatriya is above the people.

As a servant, a sudra is essentially the master's property; the master's will is his law. A sudra's own property may be taken away from him; he may be severely punished or even killed at the master's whim. (AB VII.29).

The fragment (AB VIII.24) on the *purohita* (family-priest) shows the great significance attributed at the time to priests, their authority, and their role in society's spiritual life.

On the historico-philosophical plane, the fragment on "dying round the Brahma" (AB VIII.28) is worthy of the closest attention. It is very important for reconstructing the history of the formation of the Brahman category. Here Brahman is not yet a substance, as it will become in the Upanisads, but it is no longer a chant or prayer as in the Rig Veda — it is rather the support of nature round which the dying and the birth take place, the transition of one natural phenomenon into another (of a lightning into rain, of the moon into the sun, of the sun into fire, etc.).

Some historians of philosophy believe that the Brahmanas, being commentatory literature, have no great value on the philosophical plane. We cannot concur with this view, for the Brahmanas are the connecting link between the Samhitas and the Upanisads, and some important categories of ancient Indian philosophy were developed in them.

The Satapatha Brahmana is, in our view, one of the most interesting collections of Brahmanas in terms of the history of philosophy. What is man? What does man consist of? What is his essence? Which of the senses brings man the most reliable (genuine) information about the surrounding world, vision or hearing? Perhaps, neither the one nor the other but the thought? These are the questions with which the authors of that collection were concerned.

Of great interest are the propositions on the links between thought and the word (1,4) and between human thought and emotion (X, 3).

The sense-process and thought have, according to the authors of the Satapatha Brahmana, a common basis — breath (X, 3). In this connection, reference is made to Atman as the essence ("soul") of man, and not man alone but also of any object or phenomenon in general. Each natural phenomenon that comes into being (is created) "searches for its own Atman", that is, assumes in the course of time a definiteness and takes up a suitable place among other natural phenomena; only after that does it "become manifest,— more defined, more substantial". Later, in the Upanisads, Atman is interpreted as an absolute body or absolute soul.

In the fragment "The Thought as the Primary Source" (X, 5), the authors go back to the theme of the Nasadiya hymn (the Rig Veda, X, 129) — the nature of the primary source ("There was then neither what is nor what is not"). However, the Rig Veda declares the undifferentiated original matter to be the beginning of all beginnings, while the Satapatha Brahmana presents thought as that kind of beginning. Thought is here regarded as a kind of potential, a possibility, while the real world and nature are the state in which thought assumes a clear shape or, to put it in modern terms, is realised possibility.

The fragments "Truth and Untruth" (II, 2), "The Genuine and the Non-Genuine" (XI, 5) afford a view of the development of ethic categories. Very characteristic is the tendency of opposing the "genuine" and the "non-genuine", of "good" and "evil", etc. The gods are the carriers of the genuine and the Asuras or demons, the carriers of the non-genuine. Noteworthy is the idea that men of truth and honesty are, as a rule, more contemptible and poorer than false and

dishonest men, though ultimately he "who speaks the truth diligently" triumphs, while he who speaks untruth comes to naught. This ethical principle is later developed in the Upanisads.

The fragments "On the Origin of All from That Which Is Not" (VI, 1), "Water as the First Beginning" (XI, 1), and "Brahman" (XI, 2) confirm that the Brahmanas, being the product of the creativity of different authors, contain the beginnings of two principal philosophical directions, materialist and idealist.

According to one of these texts (VI, 1), the primary principle had no concrete form of existence and was in this sense "the non-existent". But it was not absolute emptiness, for it "breathed" possessing various "desires" and even wisdom ("The Rishis, assuredly, it is they that were the non-existent"). Here too Prajapati is mentioned as the force arising out of the non-existent and becoming the creator (or multiplying in the form) of the concrete kinds of existence. Prajapati created the Brahman, the "foundation" of the universe. According to another fragment (XI, 1), the primary principle of all that is is water. From water an embryo came into being, and from the egg, Prajapati. Prajapati gave birth to the earth, the space, the sky, the seasons, the Asuras, etc. The authors of the third text (XI, 2) believe that "The Brahman (n) is the first-born of this All". The Brahman created the gods, etc. Thus in the fragments quoted here the Brahman is regarded as the original form of organisation of all that is (a kind of "universal community") and as a creative force.

Of considerable interest is the Vaisvanara fragment (X, 6). It was apparently compiled at

a time when ancient Indians proceeded from the study of natural objects to the study of man himself. The Vaisvanara is everything given to man; everything that forms the basis of man's life; everything by which man exists. Vaisvanara is not only earth, water, space, wind, sun, sky, it is also man's eyes, mouth, breath, etc. The authors of this fragment want to find out what is essential for man to live. They do not yet consider the task of studying man's essence. The ancient Indians endeavoured to solve that task later, in the Upanisads.

The Aranyakas and the Upanisads were compiled later than the other parts of the Vedas.

The Aranyakas (lit. "silvan"; the silvan texts) are usually referred to as the literature of the hermits and for the hermits, that is, those wise men who withdrew to the forest hermitages to contemplate the "essence of all that is and what takes place". Escape from the villages to the forest was due, first of all, to considerations of safety. At a time when social contradictions grew, the priests were afraid to indulge in high contemplation before the eyes of the people, and still more were they afraid of the people beginning to contemplate themselves: they were afraid of the people's free thought. In accordance with the changes in the historical situation, the priests shifted the accents in their interpretations of the Samhitas and Brahmanas. Their goal was justifying and supporting the domination and political activity of the powers that be. There is a distinct tendency in the activities of the priests to monopolise the interpretation of the Vedic texts. He who has no property has no right, and can have no right, to interpret the scriptures. "The

wise men of the forest" ascribed great significance to the efficacy of the word and also believed in the magic force of ideas and topics. An incorrectly understood or, still more dangerous, pernicious idea could have a harmful effect on the attitudes and moods of men, of the whole people. The wise men of the forest took great pains to shroud ideological problems in mystery and the supernatural, making them inaccessible to the uninitiated.

The Aranyaka texts contain speculative interpretations of the traditional Vedic themes — the beginning of all beginnings, the *atman*, the *purusa*, man, his essence, predestination, etc. The authors of the Aitareya Aranyaka, for example, place the main emphasis on the origins of all that is and its links with the concrete phenomena of nature.

The fragment traditionally referred to as Ukta (II, 1) is a hymn to speech. The world surrounding man (the earth, the sky, space) and man himself have their existence in speech, they are expressed in words.

In the third and the fourth parts of the second book of the Aitareya Aranyaka, the *atman* is placed in the centre of everything that is: it is not merely the creator of all (of the worlds, water, light, etc.) but the carrier of the rational principle as well. It is important to note this here, for later, in some of the Upanisads, the *atman* and reason come to be regarded as identical concepts.

The fragments tentatively called "The Atman" and "Man" (II, 3) draw a distinction between man, animal, and plant. Man as a reasoning being is placed above all (he towers above all the worlds). At the same time it is admitted that the *atman*

(and, consequently, reason too, to some extent) is inherent in plants and animals. Man's superiority to animals lies not only in the fact that he is endowed with reason to a greater degree than others, but also in his reason being continually perfected (the *atman* becomes purer and purer in man). Man never rests content with what he attains (whatever he attains, he tries to surpass). As for animals, they do not know goal-directed activity (their knowledge of other animals derives from hunger and thirst).

The Upanisads is the properly philosophical part of the Vedas. They are not books or philosophical treatises in the proper sense of the word but rather collections of texts compiled by different authors, mostly anonymous ones, at different times and on different subjects. Each text is a rather short exposition of the philosophical musings of some author speaking on behalf of a legendary or semi-legendary wise man. It is not surprising that the texts contain diverging interpretations of worldview problems: the two tendencies, materialist and idealist, can be discerned here too. The Upanisads, covering a long historical period, are usually divided into "early" and "late" ones. The earliest are Chandogya, Brhadaranyaka, Aitareya, Kausitaki, Taittiriya, and Kena. It should be noted that the Upanisads, as a rule, are unpolished stylistically; they remind one of an uncorrected stenographic script. True, that has some positive aspects as well: we observe the first philosophers in their workroom, as it were.

Let us give a short characteristic and outline the content of some of the Upanisads.

(1) *The Chandogya Upanisad* is part of the Chandogya Brahmana consisting of ten chapters. The first two chapters of this Brahmana are devoted to

the sacrificial rituals, the rest comprise the Chandogya Upanisad proper. In the view of some scholars, the Chandogya Upanisad is the most ancient of all the Upanisads. It may be regarded as the first philosophical part of the Vedas.

The Brahmanas attributed prime importance to invoking the forces of nature (the deities) through action (*karmamarga*), that is to say, to the act of sacrifice itself, while the Chandogya Upanisad stresses the internal sacrifice, the one in the mind and the soul, rather than external ritual. The word, speech, and contemplation assume ever greater significance. The authors of the Chandogya Upanisad believe everything to be mortal, including the gods. That which is mortal becomes immortal only when it is expressed in the word, finding asylum in it (I, 4).

The *om* syllable, consisting of three letters (sounds), "a", "u", "m", symbolised the three Vedas — the Rig Veda, the Sama Veda, the Yajur Veda. In some *slokas* (couplets), the *om* syllable is called the Udgitha, a Sama Veda hymn chanted aloud.

In the subsequent sections the Udgitha is given a broader interpretation (I, 2; 1, 8-9). The Udgitha is regarded as something noncontradictory, homogeneous, and eternal. For instance, breathing through the nose cannot be revered as the Udgitha, for it perceives both that which smells good and that which smells evil. Speech is not to be revered as the Udgitha, for men speak both truth and untruth. But breathing through the mouth can be revered as the Udgitha, for it does not perceive that which is contradictory. It is the Udgitha, it is the Atman.

The fragment "The Pranas" (III, 13) gives the first classification of the pranas, or kinds of breathing. The authors of this fragment endeavour to establish a functional connection between the types of

breathing, on the one hand, and the mental and sensor processes in the human organism, on the other. A characteristic parallel is drawn between the senses and the human properties and nature: vision is analogous to the sun; hearing, to the moon; speech, to fire; and thought, to rain. The sky is said to be illuminated with the same brightness "as that which shines within mankind".

The following fragments deal mostly with the interpretation of one of the basic concepts of ancient Indian philosophy — the Brahman concept (the substance of primary reality).

The Upanisads contain no precise and clear definition of Brahman. The texts are mostly rough notes comprising a plethora of materials with no direct bearing on the problem of primary reality.

In discussing Brahman, the authors of the Upanisads place considerable emphasis on the "foundation". What is the foundation of man? In other words, what is that property of man without which he cannot exist? Man will continue to live if he is deprived of vision, speech, or hearing, but he cannot live when deprived of breath. It follows that man's foundation is breath.

What is the foundation of all the other objects and phenomena of nature? What becomes of that which is deprived of the foundation (whither go the creations of this world?). Whence returns that which acquires a foundation? The quality of a universal "foundation" is ascribed to Brahman: everything proceeds from it and everything merges in it. Uddalaka, one of the authors and personages of the Chandogya Upanisad, regards any singular thing as closely connected with its substantial basis. Only the substance has genuine existence ("truth in clay", "truth

in iron"). As for the singular thing, it is merely a manifestation (of the substance).

Uddalaka and the other authors of the Upanisads link up the concept of Brahman with that of *atman*. *Atman* is regarded as an eternal and invariable essence (*atman* that does not grow old or die) but at the same time an active one: in accordance with its genuine desires and intentions, it is constantly active in this world, particularly in the body of man.

The concept of *atman*, the soul world, which developed from the concept of the *purusa* world (in Rig Veda) and the early conception of the personal creator (Prajapati), ultimately grows in the Upanisads into the impersonal cause of all that is, Brahman. Brahman appears as the force, materialised in all the existing objects, which creates, maintains, and returns unto itself all the worlds, the whole nature.

The Chandogya Upanisad contains a number of interesting ideas of epistemological significance. For example, Uddalaka studies the substantial link between thought (or mind) and man's breath as the "foundation" (VI, 8,2). It is necessary to distinguish, says Uddalaka, between the idea of a thing and the thing itself, the "names" of the objects or phenomena of nature from the objects and phenomena themselves. In his view, the knowledge of the name helps to attain a desirable effect within the compass of the name, that is, it helps man to orient himself in the situation surrounding him. In this sense, a name should be appreciated ("revered"). But that is not enough, for there is something greater than the name. What is that which is greater or more important than the name? Speech. But speech is not the most important thing either. Thought is greater than speech, for thought comprises both name and speech. The idea or design is greater than thought, for name, speech, and thought merge in a unity due to design. The next step in the hierarchy, the one that follows thought, is the concept of breath, according to Uddalaka: breath is greater than all the others, for man cannot live without breath.

Of great interest is the fragment on cognition of cognition. It goes without saying that we do not have here a theory of knowledge yet, but the very fact that the problem of the conditions and purpose of human cognition is mooted here is noteworthy. There are also interesting aphorisms here: he triumphs in arguments on whose side is the truth; he attains happiness who acts, etc.

The fragment on "The Five Fires" (V, 10) contains ideas which will later be developed in the doctrine of reincarnation and of requital (*karma*). According to the conceptions of the ancient Indians, a human soul only temporarily leaves this world for the next after a person's death. As it gets back to this world, the soul may find itself in the body of an unworthy person or, which is worse, in the body of an animal (a dog, a pig, etc.), reptile or insect. Everything depends on that person's behaviour during the first sojourn in this world: as you sow, you shall reap.

(2) *The Brhadaranyaka Upanisad* adjoins the Satapatha Brahmana. Just as many other Upanisads, its themes differ but little from the Chandogya Upanisad. Here too, the main thing is establishing the essence of Brahman and Atman.

There are different views of Brahman inherent in the text of this Upanisad. In one of the fragments (I, 6) the concept of Brahman is used to denote the substantial basis of the separate groups of homogeneous phenomena: speech is the Brahman of all the names (for "it upholds the names"); eyesight is the Brahman of all the forms (for "it upholds all

forms"); *atman* is the Brahman of all works (for "it upholds all works").

Another fragment (II, 3) ascribes to Brahman two principal forms of existence, *sat* and *tya*. *Sat* is the material or bodily being; it is motionless, inert, transient, and mortal. *Tya* is the immaterial being; it is eternally in motion and immortal.

In the main body of the texts (the teachings of the wise man named Yajnavalkya), Brahman is described as the universal common basis (substance) of all that is. Everything proceeds from Brahman, everything returns to Brahman. Brahman has different properties: it has eyesight, sense of touch, hearing, mind, and knowing. However, when it is in a purely substantial or Brahmanic state ("one without another"), it does not and cannot manifest any of these properties, as for any property to manifest itself, it is necessary that "another" should exist, that is, some object relative to which this property may be manifested (IV, 3, 31). Yajnavalkya believes this division of that which is into the "one" and "another" to be only possible in this earthly world.

The Brhadaranyaka Upanisad reflects tendencies both towards objective and subjective idealism and towards materialism. Yajnavalkya's teaching contains objective-idealist elements, whereas the fragment "On the Sources of Names, Forms, and Works" (I, 6) shows rudiments of subjective idealism (the individual *atman* as the source of works). The author of the fragment "Water as the Primary Source" (V, 5) takes a materialist view of the basis of all that is.

Epistemologically, of considerable interest is the fragment "Thought, Speech, Breath" (I, 5, 3). The connection between the senses and reasoning is discussed here. There is no sensation without

mind ("a person sees with the mind, hears with the mind").

(3) *The Aitareya Upanisad* adjoins the Rig Veda and consists of three chapters.

This Upanisad apparently gives an explanation of the meaning of sacrifices, expounding also the author's view of the nature of man, the content and purpose of his life. The fragment "Atman as the Source of Life" is evidence of strong rationalist tendencies in Indian thinking of the times ("The entire universe is based on consciousness").

(4) *The Kausitaki Upanisad*, also called Kausitaki-Brahmana-Upanisad, which adjoins the Rig Veda, consists of four chapters.

The main content of this Upanisad is the doctrine of transmigration of souls, or reincarnation (*samsara*). According to this doctrine, the eternal and immortal soul (*atman*) passes after death from one bodily integument into another. Depending on the deeds (*karma*) in the past incarnations, the good and bad deeds, the soul may be reborn in most diverse forms, in the bodily integuments of man, animal, or even insect. The end of reincarnations is believed to be the highest goal of life: it can only be achieved through the merging of the soul with Brahman.

(5) *The Taittiriya Upanisad* adjoins the Yajur Veda and consists of three parts or Vallis. The first or the Shiksha-Valli deals with phonetics, the second and third (Brahmananda-Valli and Bhirigu-Valli), with the knowledge of Brahman.

The rationalist tendency in the Upanisads is most strongly manifested in the Taittiriya Upanisad. The principal thesis of this Upanisad is this: everything in human life depends on knowledge. Knowledge directs the acts of men, all gods respect knowledge,

and Brahman itself is ultimately knowledge.

As distinct from the pessimists of the Maitri Upanisad, the authors of the Taittiriya Upanisad are full of faith in man, his abilities and creative potential. According to them, man can be happy (attain bliss) on this earth, too. To attain it, however, he must be clever, strong, and adroit (II, 8).

In some texts, *atman* (the spirit, the soul) is regarded as something secondary or derivative.

A different view is adopted in the fragment "On the Ways of Knowing Brahman" (III, 1-9): "from mind, indeed, all living beings are born and having been born, they remain alive by mind and at the end they absorb into mind again"; mind is Brahman.

(6) *The Kenopanisad* adjoins Sama Veda. All of the four parts of which this Upanisad consists are devoted to the interpretation of the essence of Brahman. Brahman is presented as the ultimate cause and purpose of the existence of this world, of nature: everything was born from Brahman and must ultimately return to it. Characteristically, this Upanisad speaks of only one path of man to Brahman — the path through knoweldge rather than through abstinence or any other type of asceticism.

(7) *The Isa Upanisad*, also called the Isavasya Upanisad, adjoins the Yajur Veda.

This Upanisad was apparently compiled in late Vedic times when many concepts had been to some extent worked out and the Upanisad doctrine in certain parts canonised.

In the view of the authors of the Isa Upanisad, there are two objects of knowledge and correspondingly two kinds of knowledge. The first and the primary object of cognition is the substance

(*atman-Brahman*). A knowledge of substance is referred to as genuine knowledge (*vidya*). He who has this knowledge attains "Supreme Knowledge". The second object of cognition is the objects and phenomena of nature; he who cognises them, attains only "inferior knowledge", for he knows things, objects, and phenomena, but he does not know their genuine nature; in this sense, this knowledge is absence of knowledge (*avidya*). *Avidya* complements *vidya*.

The division of knowledge into two kinds, *vidya* and *avidya*, and consideration of the conditions of the links between them is evidence of profound penetration by the Isa Upanisad authors into the essence of epistemological problems and of their historical far-sightedness.

This problem would arise before philosophers of various countries, in one form or another, centuries later: knowledge would be divided into speculative philosophical reasoning and concrete scientific knowledge. At present, the difference between speculative philosophical and concrete scientific knowledge has assumed the nature of confrontation and contrariness in bourgeois philosophy, with the two sides considering essentially an identical system of fundamental propositions under opposite axiological signs.

At both of these poles it is actually recognised that scientific methods are inadequate for the solution of the basic problems of human existence.

Marxism-Leninism decidedly rejects the belittling of the role of science. It regards science as a decisive factor of social progress, but it certainly does not deny the essential significance of other forms of culture.

(8) *The Katha Upanisad* adjoins the Yajur Veda

and consists of two chapters. It principally contains a legend of the poor pious Brahman who sent his son as a sacrifice to the god of death (Yama). The legend is full of profound philosophical musings.

(9) *The Prasna Upanisad* (*prasna* means "question") adjoins the Atharva Veda. It consists of six sections containing six questions posed before a wise man by his disciples who are mostly interested in the nature of the original cause of all that is.

(10) *The Mundaka Upanisad* adjoins the Atharva Veda. It consists of three chapters. Mundaka comes from the word mund "to shave", "to plane", "to cleanse": the teaching of the Upanisad must "cleanse" or free man from errors and ignorance.

(11) *The Mandukya Upanisad* adjoins the Atharva Veda. It contains 12 stanzas discussing the meaning of the syllable *om*.

(12) *The Svetasvatra Upanisad* adjoins the Yajur Veda. It bears the name of the wise man who taught it. Svetasvatra regards Brahman not only as the creator of the world but also as the force that rules the world and actively interferes in its affairs.

(13) *The Maitri Upanisad*, adjoining the Yajur Veda, is one of the later Upanisads. It bears a clear imprint of the scepticism and pessimism characteristic of the end of the Vedic period.

The Upanisads contain an extensive exploration of the philosophical problems. Considerable emphasis is placed on the search for the foundation of being and its nature. Some thoughts on the foundation of being were expressed in the Samhitas, Brahmanas, and the Aranyakas, but these subjects become predominant in the Upanisads. The Vedic literature throws light on the hard and at times painful search for the substantial foundation, the transition from

the less complex concepts to the more complex ones, and the formation of philosophical concepts.

Of great importance for the development of the idea of the primary source were the conceptions of Prajapati, Skandhas, and *prana* expounded in the Atharva Veda, the Brahmanas, and the Aranyakas in the form of myths and legends.

As the Satapatha Brahmana (XII. 1.6) tells us, the beginning of all beginnings was water. The waters bore a golden embryo, and out of the egg came Prajapati ("lord of generation"), the ancestor of all living beings. In what way did all living beings emerge? According to the myth, Prajapati had the desire: "May I be reproduced!"[1] He worked himself up through *tapas*, and immersing himself in the *tapas*, he created the worlds: the earth, the aerial space, and the sky. He spread himself over these worlds like a brooding hen and began to hatch them, and out of them three luminaries arose: the Agni (fire) out of the earth, the Vayu (wind) out of air, and the Aditi (infinity) out of the sky. Then he spread himself over these luminaries too (began to hatch them), and three Vedas emerged out of them, the Rig Veda out of the Agni, the Yajur Veda out of the Vayu, and the Sama Veda, out of the Aditi. In some texts Prajapati is regarded as an inner creative force manifesting itself in the crops (the produce) of each season. Human life is maintained thanks to these gifts of nature.

The *skandha* (lit. "support") conception is an attempt to understand and formulate the ultimate or final basis of all things. The authors of this conception proceed from the fact that all the individual foundations taken together have a com-

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[1] See the Rig Veda, X, 129.

mon foundation (the foundation of foundations) which supports (unifies and expresses) all the other forces however great and powerful they might be (*purusa*, Prajapati, etc.). But the *skandha* category was not developed any further either at the time of the formation of the Upanisads or at the time when the Indian philosophical systems were formed.

A few words about the *prana* or breath conception. Already in the Brahmanas, there is a tendency to depart from deifying the forces and phenomena of nature. Gradually that which stands "behind" the natural phenomena, underlying them as a basis or foundation, becomes the object of worship. If man is to be successively deprived of eyesight, hearing, taste, the sense of smell and touch, he will live; but if man is deprived of breath, he will perish. Hence the conclusion was drawn that the foundation of man is breath; the human body is merely the integument concealing something living and breathing — the *prana*. Prana is "the breath of life", life itself, the vital force. In the Upanisads, the *prana* conception is further developed.[1] *Prana* (in the singular) is identified with the concept of soul (*atman*). *Pranas* (in the plural) are regarded as the "organs of the soul": breath, speech, vision, hearing, and mind. Finally, *pranas*

[1] The Chandogya Upanisad (111, 13) gives, for the first time, a classification of the *pranas* ("breathings"). There are no precise data so far as to how the ancient Indians visualised all these *pranas*. There are numerous and often contradictory opinions about that. We follow the interpretation of *pranas* suggested by German Sanskritist Paul Deussen. But see *Gurshabad Ratnakar Mahankosh* for a detailed explanation of the *pranas*.— *Ed.*

are types of breathing (*prana*, *apana*, *vyana*, *udana*, *samana*).[1]

The search for the primary principle culminates in the Brahman and Atman categories — the most important, pivotal concepts of ancient Indian philosophy.

The word Brahman has several meanings in Vedic texts: Brahman "member of the priest Varna, the Varna of the Brahmans"; the Brahmana "part of the Vedas"; Brahma as the name of one of the Vedic gods; finally Brahman[2] as the philosophical concept which in its turn is used in different

[1] *Prana* means breath in general or intake of breath. *Apana* is exhaling or breathing downward. *Vyana* is the intermediate breath, the interval between inhaling and exhaling. *Udana* is breath directing the stream of air upwards. *Samana* is inner breath uniting all the other kinds of breath.

The Yogi later built their teaching of breath on this classification.

The authors of the Chandogya Upanisad made an attempt to establish a functional connection between the kinds of breath, on the one hand, and the thinking and sensory processes in the human organism, on the other.

[2] There is no generally accepted view of the etymology of the word Brahman. R. C. Zaechner writes: "Originally it seems to have meant prayer, and, by extension, a spell; later it is used as an equivalent for three Vedas, and still later as the sacred power underlying any sacred action" (R. Zaechner, *Hindu and Muslim Mysticism,* Schocken Books, New York, 1960, pp. 23-24). In this way Brahman became a substance or absolute devoid of any personal aspects. As opposed to the impersonal Brahman, theism appears only in the later Upanisads: "All this, whatsoever moves in this universe, is indwelled by Isa," asserts the Isa Upanisad. Here a personal god is regarded as something superior to Brahman. The theistic tendency reaches the highest point in the Svetasvatra Upanisad and in particular in the Bhagavad Gita, where god announces through Krishna:

"This Universe the womb is where I plant Seed of all lives! Thence, Prince of India, comes Birth to all beings!"

meanings, which bears testimony to the complexity of the formation of philosophical categories in Vedic literature.

In some texts, the Brahman concept designates the common properties underlying a group of homogeneous objects or phenomena, unifying them and being their cause: speech is the Brahman of all words, for all names came from speech; *atman* (the human soul) is the Brahman of all works, "for it upholds all works" (the Brhadaranyaka Upanisad, I.6), etc. In others it is asserted that "there are two modes of Brahman, what has form, and what has no form, the one mortal, the other immortal, again finite one, and the other infinite, again the one existing and the other beyond" (The Brhadaranyaka Upanisad, II.3). In still other texts, Brahman is declared to be truth and regarded as derivative from the material primary principle: "Water was at first this (world). Water created truth. Truth is Brahman..." (The Brhadaranyaka Upanisad, V. 5). Finally, for the authors of the later Upanisads, Brahman is an absolute substance, the ultimate basis and first cause of all that is, the beginning and the end of all things and beings, that is, that "from where all living beings are born, after being born where they live, and where they ultimately dissolve" (see Taittiriya Upanisad, III, 1).

The word *atman* also has several meanings in Vedic texts, and these meanings reflect the history of the formation of this category: *atman* is the body, or breath, or the individual human soul, or finally the universal soul (the primary principle, the absolute substance identical with Brahman).

In the Chandogya Upanisad (VIII, 7-12), two directly opposite views on the nature of *atman* are expounded. According to the first of them, defended by the Asur (demon) Virocana, *atman* and body are one and the same (in the Indian religious tradition, the seed of materialism was sown by the Asuras). According to the second view, defended by the god Indra, *atman* is immaterial, it is the spirit.

In the Upanisads, the second view triumphed, and its development ultimately led to identifying *atman* as the spiritual self of an individual person with the absolute soul of all that is: "It is thy soul, which is within every (being)" (The Brhadaranyaka Upanisad, III, 5). The seed of this idea was sown already in the myths, which drew a parallel between man and the world surrounding him. Surya the Sun-god is, according to these myths, the eye of the world; the parts of the world, his ears; the plants, his hair; Vayu (the wind), his breath; the waters, the seed of life, etc. In short, the world is the universal person, *purusa*. If all the universal members are mentally taken away from *purusa* one by one, his foundation turns out to be the universal breath, the universal *atman*, the absolute soul identical with Brahman. "And everything that is, is Brahman. The Self (*atman*) is Brahman"— that is the result of the search for the ultimate reality of being.[1]

Thus, although there are quite a few materialist ideas in the Upanisads, the objective idealist view of the nature of Brahman and *atman* emerges victorious, particularly in the later Upanisads.

The Vedic literature shows the way in which

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[1] S. Radhakrishnan believes that defining the ultimate reality in the words "Atman-Brahman" means characterising it from two sides, the subjective (Atman) and the objective (Brahman) (see S. Radhakrishnan, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 146).

ancient Indians' attention gradually shifted from the phenomena of the external world to man, his psyche and consciousness. Thus the question of the relations between man and the universal substance (*atman*-Brahman) assumes great importance in the Upanisads.

According to the Upanisads, this world, all the objects and phenomena of the world, man included, proceeded from the *atman*-Brahman; a return into the womb of the *atman*-Brahman is in store for everything in this world. This circle of being may be discontinued: man (his soul) may sink into the substance for good, merging with *atman*-Brahman and dissolving in it. That is the purpose of man's existence in general. At the same time, attaining that goal presupposes a certain activity on the part of man. Here the question of the mutual relations between man and substance assumes the nature of an ethical problem that is linked with the doctrine of *karma* and *dharma*.

According to the *karma* doctrine, every person is requited according to his or her deeds, good or bad. Only "he who has correct understanding, who is ever pure and whose mind is well controlled, reaches that goal from where none is again born" (Kathopanisad, Section I, Part III. 8), that is, he who deserved that during his lifetime on earth. Every person has his *dharma*, his law of the mode of life preordained from on high. For instance, the *dharma* of brahmanas performing religious ceremonies and that of ksatriyas consists in ruling society, implementing state power. The duty of the vaisyas is keeping the brahmanas, the ksatriyas, and themselves, they must till the soil, breed cattle, and practise crafts and commerce. The *dharma* of sudras consists in serving the members of the upper three varnas and practising the

handicrafts. Deviation from performance of the *dharma* may result in that person's soul being reborn in the bodily integument of an animal or even an insect. If the *dharma* is followed faithfully, the soul may be reborn in a person of a higher social standing. The social orientation of this doctrine is quite obvious.

In considering the interrelations between man and the substance, and man's activity, the authors of the Upanisads express certain ideas on knowledge. For some authors, the process of cognition, the transition from ignorance to knowledge, signifies the transition from one (lower) state of *atman* to another (higher) state. According to them, there are four states of *atman* all in all: the waking state, the dreaming state, deep dreamless sleep, and Turiya.

The universal *atman*'s sojourn on the earth is thought of as sleep. The first or lower kind of sleep (the first state of *atman*) is the action of *atman* in man in his waking hours, that is, when a person is engaged in his daily pursuits, working and accumulating the necessary skills and knowledge; that is the first or lower kind of knowledge. In the waking state, man and his *atman* are the farthest from the truth (the universal *atman*), for all of his attention is directed at the crude and ungenuine matter.

The second kind of sleep, or the second state of *atman*, is the action of *atman* when a man is dreaming. That is the second and higher kind of cognition, for when a person is asleep, his individual *atman* abandons, as it were, the body and the daily cares and impressions, approaching the universal *atman* and true life.

The third kind of sleep (the third state of *atman*)

is the action of *atman* in the body of a person in deep dreamless sleep. In this state, constituting the third type of cognition, the individual *atman* is dissolved in the universal *atman* and enjoys bliss.

In the fourth state (Turiya), *atman* has no experiences at all, being completely unaware of the material world, merging with the universal *atman* and being identical with it.

It is difficult to say anything definite about Turiya as a kind of cognition. Let the Upanisad speak for itself: "Turiya, Lord of the fourth aspect, according to the wise, remains unaware of the external, intermediate, and internal worlds. He lies beyond both consciousness and unconsciousness; where sight cannot penetrate, nor thought, which is indescribable, bearing no relation to anything. Turiya enjoys pure awareness and experiences peace, bliss and nonduality. He is none other than Atman. Realise Him" (Mandukya Upanisad, 7).

The Upanisads also touch on other aspects of the problem of knowledge. Among other things, great attention is paid to the psychological side of knowledge, to the state of man which, in ancient Indians' view, facilitated the attainment of supreme knowledge — the merging of individual *atman* with the universal one. Thus a number of the Upanisads expound the teaching of knowledge through Yoga (the Mundaka Upanisad, III. 2; the Katha Upanisad, II.3, etc.).[1]

Apart from that, one should note the views of the authors of the Upanisads concerning the meaning of words, the formation of speech out of words,

[1] The ways of knowledge, or the methods for "freeing" used by the Yogi, (Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Jnana Yoga, Raja Yoga), are discussed in the chapter on the philosophy of Vivekananda.

the reason directing thought, etc. The Chandogya Upanisad speaks of the inalienable links between thought and its material basis (breath); of the need to distinguish the thought about an object from the object itself; and of knowledge of knowledge. The Brhadaranyaka Upanisad (1.5) considers the connection between sensation ("feeling") and thinking ("thought").

The Upanisad texts contain extremely valuable materials for the study of the laws of transition from particular concepts to general ones, from concrete ones to abstract and finally to the categories.

From the historico-philosophical view, the Vedic literature is of the greatest importance for the study and understanding of the history of all subsequent Indian philosophy.

As has been mentioned earlier, there is a longstanding tradition in India of dividing all philosophical systems into two large groups, orthodox (the true ones, recognising the authority of the Vedas) and heterodox. The orthodox ones mainly include six principal schools: Vedanta, Mimamsa, Samkhya, Yoga, Nyaya, and Vaisesika. The heterodox schools comprise three trends: Charvaka Lokayata, Buddhism, and Jainism.

However, all of these systems or schools took shape under the direct influence of the Vedas, and the traditional division of these systems does not express either an actual essential difference between them or the true character of the impact made on them by the Vedas.[1] As we have said

[1] "Orthodoxy" in ancient India was defined more in social and political terms than in those of beliefs and convictions: the orthodox was expected to conform precisely to the rules of social relations, the laws of Varna, and Vedic rituals. Orthodoxy

before, Vedic literature contains elements of opposing doctrines, materialist and idealist, with the latter predominant. We must therefore distinguish between two principal channels through which the Vedas influenced the subsequent development of Indian philosophy. Thus the Vedanta idealist conception borrowed from the Upanisads the notions of Brahman as the first cause of all the material objects and phenomena of nature; of *atman* as the absolute soul, the first cause of all the individual "consciousnesses" or souls; of *karma* as the substantial moral law, etc.

The formulation and solution of philosophical problems in the Upanisads (and in the Vedanta of the modern times, too) is extremely original.

For example, the Katha Upanisad formulates the fundamental problem of philosophy as the problem of the essence and correlation of life and death or, on a broader plane, the essence and correlation of the next world (the *atman*-Brahman world) and this one (the world of nature). The literary form of the exposition is the parable.

Let us give the substance of the parable.

Once upon a time a devout Hindu desired divine bounty. For this, he was prepared to offer a sacrifice of something which he held dearest of all. He had a son named Nachiketa. That son noticed that his father sacrificed to the gods those things which were not too dear to him,

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is *cila,* that is, conduct, rather than *craddha,* which means piety, offering sacrifices to the ancestors, and only in the last place, faith. In the philosophical views, Samkhya and Buddhism are often close to each other, sometimes much closer than the "godless Samkhya" and the "unconditional monism" (*anirbhedaadvaita*), and still both of these trends are included among the six orthodox systems, whereas Buddhism is regarded as heresy.

those from which he could part easily. The son knew that his father loved him very much. So once he had the idea that his father would have to sacrifice him. So he asked his father: "To whom will you give me?" The father evaded a direct answer. A little later the son repeated the question more insistently, but he did not get an answer. Soon he asked that question again. This time the father was so angry that he said, "To death I shall give you."

According to the customs of the country, having said so, the father had to keep his word, so the son went to Yama, the Lord of Death. As the Lord of Death was absent, Nachiketa lived for three days and nights at his house without the usual courtesies of hospitality. According to the customs of the country, a guest is served by the master of the house and the whole household, who fetch water for him to wash, feed him, etc. When the Lord of Death returned home, he saw that Nachiketa had lived at his house without the pleasure of hospitality, and he said to Nachiketa in an attempt to redress the wrong done him: "Oh Brahman, you are an honourable guest, but in my absence you stayed in my house for three nights without a meal. Choose, therefore, three boons, one in respect of each of these nights as compensation. Oh Brahman, my salutation to you. Be good to me."

So Nachiketa asked the Lord of Death: "O Death, as the first of the three boons, grant that my father may be cheerful and free from anger and anxiety concerning me, and may he recognise and welcome me when I am sent back by you." And Yama said, "Let it be so!"

Nachiketa said: "The second boon that I ask is this. Tell me what I should do to get to heaven.

I am eager to know the truth, for in heaven there is no fear, nor are you there, O Death, nor is anyone subject to old age. They have conquered hunger and thirst and they are merry and free from sorrow in heaven." Yama answered: "I shall tell you this, and you will be on firm ground which is hidden from men by darkness." And the Lord of Death told Nachiketa about the "divine fire"[1] which is hidden in man and which is our true credence altar. "The divine fire will lead you to life eternal,"[2] concluded the Lord of Death.

Then Nachiketa said: "This doubt exists. Some say when a man dies 'he exists' and some say 'he does not'. This I should like to know. Explain it to me. This is my third boon."

Yama replied: "Even the gods in ancient times doubted that point. It is very subtle and difficult to understand. Do not keep me to the boon but choose some other, O Nachiketa. Abandon that boon and release me from the obligation."

Nachiketa insisted: "I shall not choose any other boon, answer my question." The Lord of Death said: "Ask for sons and grandsons who will live a hundred years, for elephants, horses, gold and herds of cattle, a vast territory on earth, and a long span of life. And if you can think of some other boon of equal worth, ask also for that: wealth or a long life. O Nachiketa, be king of the wide earth. I shall make you the enjoyer of all your desires... All this I offer you, but do not ask about death."

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[1] The "divine fire" is the soul which, according to the Katha Upanisad, is man's eternal essence.

[2] This idea occurs in the other Upanisads, too. Thus, the Svetasvatra Upanisad says that, when the true nature of one's *atman* becomes a light, as it were, one sees in concentration the Brahman's true identity.

But Nachiketa continued to insist: "All these things, O Death, are not everlasting and only decay the vigour of man's faculties. The whole span of life is indeed short, so keep your chariots, horses, dance and music and merry-making things with you. Man cannot be satisfied with wealth or enjoy long life, seeing you. That boon alone which I chose is fit to be craved... O Death, tell me that which people doubt on, regarding the supreme life after death."

So in the end the Lord of Death had to answer the third question, saying: "Worldly objects give either joy or pleasure, and both bind man. Fortune is kind to him who chooses the joyful, but one who follows the pleasurable remains in delusion. The joyful and pleasurable lie before man. The wise man, after discriminating and examining them well, prefers the joyful, but the ignorant, due to greed and attachment, chooses the pleasurable." The Lord of Death praised Nachiketa for seeking wisdom and knowledge. The pleasures which he had offered Nachiketa had not tempted him. So Death continued: "The ignorant deluded by wealth never see the path of the hereafter. 'This is the only world and there is no other', thinking like this, such foolish men become my victims. The wise man abandons both joy and sorrows by meditation on the Self, that ancient illuminous one, difficult to perceive, subtle and unfathomable, who is seated in the heart cave in the body.[1] ...The Atman cannot be known through the study of scriptures, or by much learning or

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[1] The reference here is to Atman as the absolute soul existing in man in the shape of an individual soul (the "inner Atman").

intelligence. He is attained by him whom He chooses. To him alone does the Atman reveal His own Truth... One who has realised That (Atman) which is soundless, intangible, formless, undiminishing, tasteless and odourless, eternal, without beginning or end, transcendental and unchanging, is released from the jaws of death..."

Swami Vivekananda, Aurobindo Ghose, and other outstanding Vedantists of the modern times keep reverting to this problem of problems: what will happen in the hereafter. Invoking the Katha Upanisad, Vivekananda writes that each time a person dies, a dispute arises: some say that he has gone for good, others, that he is still alive. Where lies the truth? The religious and philosophical teachings of all the peoples and countries contain a great number of answers to this question, Vivekananda goes on to say. At the same time there are attempts to erase the question itself. As long as death exists, however, all these attempts will be unsuccessful. We can freely talk saying that we do not see anything on the other side of the grave, that all our hopes must be limited to earthly life; we can be carried away by life struggle; everything that surrounds us, the whole world, may interfere with our leaving the narrow framework of our personal transient life... But as soon as we feel the coming of death, the question arises before us, time and again: "What is death? Isn't it the end of all that we catch at so feverishly, as if all this were the most real of all the real things?" In a trice, the world is extinguished and disappears. At the edge of this gaping precipice, death, even the most hardened mind will be shaken, it will retreat and ask the inevitable question. The hopes and works of a whole life will be ruined in a second. Man

lives by the desire to be happy; we catch at everything in the external world in the hope of finding that happiness. The youth at whom life smiles believes and is convinced that happiness is the whole world... But high tide is inevitably followed by low tide in life. Everything is transient, pleasure and suffering, riches and poverty, even life itself. Everything passes. Aurobindo Ghose singled out the main subject matter of modern Indian philosophy in these words: What was before birth and what follows death — these are the questions.

This approach was not accidental under the conditions prevailing in India. Jawaharlal Nehru wrote: "It must be remembered that the business of philosophy in *India* was not confined to a few philosophers or highbrows. Philosophy was an essential part of the religion of the masses; it percolated to them in some attenuated form and created that philosophic outlook which became nearly as common in India as it is in China. That philosophy was for some a deep and intricate attempt to know the causes and laws of all phenomena, the search for the ultimate purpose of life, and the attempt to find the organic unity in life's many contradictions. But for many it was a much simpler affair, which yet gave them some sense of purpose, of cause and effect, and endowed them with courage to face trial and misfortune and not lose their gaiety and composure..."[1]

The materialist ideas contained in the Upanisads were further developed in the Charvaka Lokayata system. Discarding idealism and mysticism, the materialists developed the following propositions: the

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[1] Jawaharlal Nehru, *The Discovery of India*, Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1961, p. 86.

substantial basis of all that is are material elements — water, earth, fire, air; only this world, this nature exists; the external world is independent of man; it can be changed, but only through physical action rather than through thought, magic, sacrifice, or prayer; there is no supernatural "purpose", nature is governed and directed by itself.

The Vedic literature is extremely rich and varied in its content. It has a great significance for the study of the history of philosophy, religion, law, psychology, ethics, aesthetics, language, natural science and, finally, of the forms of social life in ancient India. Many categories of modern Indian psychology, ethics and aesthetics can be traced back to the Vedic literature. Some psychologists, particularly the adherents of the Yoga schools, still continue to develop the theory of the Pranas. Vedanta, Buddhism, and other schools have worked out systems of ethical categories and developed "systems of conduct" using the Upanisad teachings of *karma*, *dharma* and *samsara* (the reincarnations of the soul). The doctrine of Brahman-*atman* as the source of the beautiful lies at the base of the aesthetic theories of the Vedanta. And so on.

2. The Period of Philosophical Sutras and Formation of the Philosophical Schools (Systems)

During this period, which lasted almost a thousand years (c. 5th century B. C.-4th century C. E.), the Upanisad literary form was gradually replaced bu the *sutras*.[1]

The sutras are extremely laconic both in language and content. Each sentence in the Sutras consisted of several syntactically loosely connected words and sometimes of one compound word only. A sequence of sentences made up the whole of the "thread" (*sutra*) of the exposition, and each sentence, a "node" or "bead" for memorising the philosophical proposition expounded. In the course of the centuries, *bhashya*, or comments on the sutras, accumulated, one comment superimposed on another. Traditionally, the later thinkers, even the most outstanding of them, regarded themselves as mere interpreters of the ancient sutra cryptogrammes. The later interpreters, explaining the views of an earlier and therefore more authoritative commentator, introduced their own views in the doctrine, so that the sutra itself got lost among these accumulations and its original meaning became obscured. That was the source of endless scholastic polemics, which polished the logical niceties of an idea but at the same time sucked dry its essence.

During the early Middle Ages (c. 4th-11th centuries), the force of the tradition of commenting was so great in India that not a single philosopher claimed the status of a founder of a new philosophy, although some of them were fully entitled to do so. Even the creator of the Advaita, which is the major philosophical system of objective idealism, the brilliant Samkara, modestly referred to himself as a mere commentator of the Vedanta.

In the course of time, during the second half of the Sutra period, the need arose for compiling précis of the basic propositions of the various systems, very short ones, without extensive commentaries but comprehensible to the erudite reader. That was the start of the *karikas* — manuals expounding philosophical doctrines. In general terms, the first

[1] *Sutra* (lit. "thread") — an aphorism or collection of aphorisms expounding the essence of a philosophical worldview.

half of the first millennium of this era is regarded as the *karika* period.

The following nine systems or schools became best developed and most widespread in India: Charvaka Lokayata, Jainism, Buddhism, Vedanta, Mimamsa, Samkhya, Nyaya, Vaisesika and Yoga.

The Materialism of the Charvakas Lokayatikas

Brhaspati (c. 7th-6th century B. C.) is believed to be the founder of the Charvaka Lokayatika school and the author of its Sutras.[1] The Charvakas Lokayatikas are materialist philosophers. It would be a rude error, however, to restrict the Brhaspati line to the materialism of the Charvakas Lokayatikas. That would mean narrowing down the social basis of Indian materialism, belittling its significance, and distorting the actual history. The materialist tendency is actually inherent in nearly all the systems or schools of Indian philosophy, including the objective-idealist system of the Vedanta of the new times, which is shown in the second half of the present work.

To characterise the philosophical materialism of the Sutras period, it is important to single out the following general features:

— recognition of the fact that the external world, of which man is part, exists objectively and is therefore not a product of his brain but exists independently of any consciousness;

— recognition of the fact that the external world manifests itself in a law-governed fashion, the laws being capable of change only through physical action rather than through ideas, magic, or prayer;

— negation of the existence of supernatural forces; the view that the world develops spontaneously, without outside interference;

— recognition of man's perceptions of the objects or phenomena of the outside world (sense experiences) as the only source of knowledge;

— rejection of the view that knowledge is esoteric, innate, or intuitive (mystical);

— recognition of the fact that the nature of man's life and activity is determined by the conditions of his life and not by a deity.

Some of these features are inherent, in some form and to a certain extent, in many systems of Indian philosophy of the medieval period and even of the modern times.

It was Brhaspati who gave ancient Indian materialism its distinctive shape. Another outstanding representative of this school was Bhishan. One of the most ancient *puranas*, the Padma Purana, says that a certain man named Kanada discovered the great teaching called Vaisesika. Gotama compiled the Nyaya *shastras*, Kapila wrote the Samkya *shastras*, a certain Brahman named Jaimini expounded the greatest atheist teaching and a man named Bhishan, the despised Charvaka teaching, while Vishnu himself, to rout the demons, took the image of Buddha to preach the completely impious doctrine of Buddhism.

This passage from the Padma Purana is also quoted by Vijñana Bhiksu, a major representative of the Samkhya philosophy. Bhishan's name is mentioned in the Mahabharata (Santiparva and Salyaparva), in the writings of Manu, and so on. Expressing the hopes and moods of the poorest strata of Indian society, Bhishan was sharply critical of Brahmanism, the Vedic religion, and the ideology of the priests. The compilers of the Vedas,

[1] We shall therefore refer to the history of Indian materialism as the Brhaspati line.

he said, were hypocrites and swindlers. Invoking the Vedas, the priests dupe the simple people with meaningless jumbles of words, living in luxury at the expense of the poor people bringing them offerings. Who the offerings for? Gods were non-existent and had never existed. Should there be offerings to the deceased relatives? But these became dust and needed no food. Just as a lamp that became extinguished would not be rekindled if oil was added to it, a dead man would not rise from the dead after a sacrificial ritual. Even if we assume that our dead relatives need food, why should we pass the food to the priests? Why should the priests eat the food if our dead ones are to be fed? That is about the same as feeding the people of one village while intending to feed those of another.

The Charvakas rejected the idea of the existence of God, recognising four material elements as the substance: earth, water, fire, and air. Combinations of these elements produce all objects and phenomena of nature, both material and spiritual. The soul is a body endowed with consciousness; the soul does not exist outside the body. Consciousness emerges from unconscious elements as their temporary combination in a specific form under definite conditions. In substantiating this proposition, Bhishan said that a man could not get drunk by eating some rice and a kind of molasses made of beetroot. A mixture of rice and molasses, however, is used to prepare wine on which man can get drunk. Consciousness is nothing but the result of a certain process of combining material elements. A man's death signifies simultaneous destruction of both consciousness and soul. A Charvaka named Ajita Keśakambalin (6th century B. C.) said that both a wise man and a fool die along with the body, both

are dead, and have no existence after death.

The Charvakas decried religious superstition which kept the people ignorant and oppressed, and opposed their view of cognition as the result of sense perception to religious visions. This viewpoint of naive sensualism certainly had its weak points. While recognising sensations and perceptions to be the only source of knowledge the Charvakas failed to realise the dialectical unity of the sensual and the rational elements in cognition. They viewed the results of man's cognitive activity in the form of abstract thinking as untrue or at any rate unreliable, containing elements of subjective arbitrariness and errors. The mind (that is, abstract thinking), said the Charvakas, did not exist without sensations and perceptions. Propositions and syllogisms were only possible on the basis of those data which were obtained through sensory channels. Moreover, abstract logical thinking (the mind) could not add anything to that which was given in sense perceptions. In other words, they failed to see the dialectics of the transition from cognition of phenomena to cognition of the essence, having a very limited and narrow conception of human practice and its role in the process of cognition. For the Charvakas, practice was the process itself of sense perception of the individual objects and phenomena of nature. The role of practice as the criterion of truth was reduced to the verifying activity of our sense organs.

It should be borne in mind, however, that the primary goal of the Charvakas was dealing a crushing blow to the ideology of Brahmanism. Jawaharlal Nehru wrote on this account: "The materialists attacked authority and all vested interest in thought, religion and theology. They denounced the Vedas and priestcraft and traditional beliefs,

and proclaimed that belief must be free and must not depend on pre-suppositions or merely on the authority of the past. They inveighed against all forms of magic and superstition. Their general spirit was comparable in many ways to the modern materialistic approach, it wanted to rid itself of the chains and burden of the past, of speculation about matters which could not be perceived, or worship of imaginary gods..."[1]

The opponents of materialism (mostly the priests, the Brahmans) did not only persecute the materialist philosophers themselves, they burned their works, so that materialist literature (the literature of the Charvakas Lokayatikas) was almost completely wiped out. "Among the books that have been lost," Nehru points out, "is the entire literature on materialism which followed the period of the early Upanishads. The only references to this, now found, are in criticisms of it and in elaborate attempts to disprove the materialist theories."[2]

The Charvaka materialism is characterised by direct orientation against idealist and religious doctrines, the desire to prove the untenability of idealism and to denounce the falsity and deception

[1] J. Nehru, *op. cit.*, p. 100.

[2] *Ibid.* The same idea is to be found in many other studies in the history of Indian philosophy. Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya, a prominent Marxist scholar, writes: "Apart from the mere mention of such lost treatises, what we now concretely possess are a few stray references to the Lokayata — views, or to its followers called the Lokayatikas, as preserved in the writings of those who wanted only to ridicule and refute the Lokayata... This philosophy had the misfortune of being known to us only through the writings of its opponents..." (D. Chattopadhyaya, *Lokayata. A Study in Ancient Indian Materialism*, People's Publishing House, New Delhi, 1959, p. 7).

of religion and its preachers. Thus the Charvakas' main purpose was denouncing Brahmanist ideology rather than creating a consistent philosophical system.

The doctrine of the Charvakas Lokayatikas can be reduced to the following four propositions.

(1) Four material elements (*mahabhuta*) are the basis of all that is: fire, earth, water, and air.[1] These elements are spontaneously active, with a force of their own (*svabhava*) inherent in them.

(2) Only "this world" (*loka*) exists; there is no hereafter or life after death;[2] that is, after man's death, his life is neither continued "there" (that is, in the Brahman-Atman world) nor revived "here" (on this earth). The Charvakas said:

While life is yours, live joyously:
None can escape Death's searching eye;
When once this frame of ours they burn
How shall it e'er again return?[3]

The Charvakas criticised the religious idealist proposition that "consciousness is the property of the immortal soul", insisting that consciousness died with the death of man, while man himself disintegrated into the four basic elements. "Man is composed of four elements," they wrote. "When man dies, the earthly element returns and relapses into the

[1] Hence one of the most probable versions of the origin of the name "Charvaka": char "four", vak "word", that is, "four words".

[2] *Loka* means "world", so that the ancient Indian materialists are sometimes called "Lokayatikas". Etymologically, the word *loka* means "that which is widespread among the people"; "that which is essentially secular".

[3] S. Radhakrishnan, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 281.

earth; the watery element returns into the water, the fiery element returns into the fire, the airy element returns into the air, the senses pass into space."[1]

(3) There are no supernatural (divine) forces. God is an invention of the rich to dupe the poor. Charvakas taught that the religion of Brahmanism, just as any other religion, was untenable and harmful, for it distracted the attention and strength of the poor towards worshipping imaginary gods, offering sacrifices to unknown forces, listening to abstract preaching, etc. Religious writings were based on the fantasies of a certain group of persons materially interested in all this.

(4) There is no soul — in the sense in which the ministers of religious cults and, in agreement with the latter, the philosophers used the term. It is matter that thinks, rather than the soul which is alleged to exist independently of matter.

(5) The law of *karma* (requital for both good and bad deeds) is an invention of the adherents of religion employed also by idealist philosophers. The source of evil on this earth should be looked for in the cruelty and injustice existing in society rather than in the properties of human nature and inevitable sufferings said to be predetermined from on high.

(6) The only source of the knowledge of nature is sense perception. Only direct perception (through the five senses) gives man genuine knowledge (*pratyaksa*). Only that exists which can be directly perceived. That which cannot be perceived does not exist; it does not exist precisely for the reason that it cannot be perceived. By "that which cannot be perceived" the Charvakas meant first and foremost such religious "essences" as God, the soul, the heavenly kingdom, etc.

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 273.

According to the Charvakas, sense perceptions can be of two kinds, external and internal. Internal perceptions emerge through the action of reason (*manas*). External perceptions are linked with the activity of the five sense organs.

Accordingly, knowledge itself is divided into two kinds or forms: the first kind is the result of contact between the sense organs and the objects of the external world; the second kind of knowledge arises through mental operations on the basis of sense data.

Elements of Materialism in the Nyaya Philosophy

The Nyaya (Sanskr. "rule", "substantiation", "method", "logical inference", "introduction to a subject", "deduction", "logic in general") is a philosophical system or school that took shape approximately at the end of the 1st century C. E. Gotama (c. 3rd century B. C.) is regarded as the originator of the Nyaya philosophy. His Nyaya-sutra is basically a materialist work.

The Nyayiks mostly studied questions in epistemology, or "the science of reasoning" (*tarkavidya*).[1] Their basic proposition is that the ma-

[1] The Nyayiks were the creators of Indian formal logic. The story is current that during Alexander the Great's campaign in India Brahman priests described the entire system of the Nyaya logic to the Greek philosopher Callisthenes, who was in Alexander's army and later passed on this system to Aristotle. This logic was said to form the foundation of Aristotle's logical theory. This view gained wide currency at one time in Oriental countries. Modern scholars, however, reject it. Jawaharlal Nehru writes: "In fact Nyaya means logic or the science of right reasoning. It is similar in many ways to Aristotle's syllogisms, though there are also fundamental differences between the two. The principles underlying Nyaya logic were accepted by all other systems [of Indian philosophy.— *V. B.*]

terial world (nature) exists objectively, and the existence of the external objects does not depend on the source of knowledge. The objects and phenomena of nature are cognised by man through the five senses. Everything that is inaccessible to sense perception has no real existence. Therefore Brahma (God) does not exist either.

The sense perception of objects is regarded as the touchstone of the reliability (or truth) of our knowledge. Vatsyayana (4th century C. E.), a commentator of the Nyaya-sutra, wrote that trustworthy knowledge was obtained from the coming in touch or contact (*sannikarsha* or *sambandha*) of the sense organs (*indriya*) and their object. This knowledge is called *pratyaksa jnyana* (sensory knowledge).

According to the Nyayiks, thinking capable of leading man to attainment of the truth, or "cognition in agreement with reality", is only possible in the presence of four elements: the subject of cognition (*pramatri*), the object of cognition (*prameya*), trustworthy knowledge (*pramiti*), and syllogism (*pramana*) as the means of cognition.

Nyayiks were mainly concerned with working out the instruments of cognition (the *pramanas*). Their teaching is therefore often termed Pramanashastra, or the science of the *pramanas*. Four kinds of *pramanas* were recognised in all: perception (*pratyaksa*), inference (*anumana*), comparison (*upamana*), and verbal testimony (*sabda*).

It is not our task here to consider the Nyaya philosophy in detail. We would merely like to

and, as a kind of mental discipline, Nyaya has been taught throughout the ancient and medieval periods and up to to-day in India's schools and universities..." (J. Nehru, *op. cit.*, pp. 190-191).

point out that the Nyayiks' sensualism was materialist in nature.

Endeavouring to bring out the similarity of the ideas of the Nyaya and the Charvakas, Ram Mohan Roy in his *History of Indian Philosophy* cites the historical legend to the effect that the first forms of this philosophy (Nyaya.— *V. B.*) was moulded by the hand of Brhaspati, so that men still speak of the cognitive ability (*buddhi*) of Brhaspati.

Later, in the early Middle Ages, when Hinduism replaced the religion of Brahmanism and the attacks of the orthodox religion on materialism intensified, the Nyaya philosophy was penetrated by preachers of idealism and theistic attitudes (Vacaspati, Udayana, Vardhamana, and others). Various attempts were made to achieve a "logical proof of the existence of God", to spread the belief in the existence of the individual soul as a substantial being, etc. At the same time, Vatsyayana, Uddyotakara, and Visvanatha continued to defend the atheist line of Gotama.

It should be noted that the works of modern bourgeois scholars refer mostly to the medieval Nyaya or, to be more precise, its theistic and idealist additions. The situation is much the same with the Vaisesika philosophical system.

Elements of Spontaneous Materialism and Dialectics in the Vaisesika

It is generally accepted in historical and philosophical literature that Kanada (c. 3rd century B. C.) was the founder of the Vaisesika school and the author of the Vaisesika-sutra. The final redaction of the sutras dates from some time not later than the lst century C. E.

Studies by Soviet Indologists have shown clearly that there is a distinct materialist tendency in the religious idealist system of the Vaisesika, a rational kernel under the idealist integument of the system, as it were. That is not accidental, for out of all the systems of Indian philosophy the Vaisesika philosophy was most closely connected with the natural-scientific views of ancient Indians.

The Vaisesikas proceed from the view that two worlds, the sensual and the suprasensual, exist objectively. They consider the supersensual world from dualist positions, and the sensual world, from those of materialism.

We shall restrict ourselves to a short exposition of the Vaisesika atomistic theory.

According to the Vaisesika-sutra, the development of the sensual world is based on atoms existing in space; they are countless in number; they are also eternal. All that is consists of four basic elements: earth, water, light, and air. Accordingly, the atoms of which the elements consist are divided into four kinds: the atoms of the earth, the atoms of water, the atoms of light, and the atoms of air. *Akasha* (ether) has no atomic structure; it fills empty space between the atoms.

Atoms are impermeable, being indivisible. Their indivisibility is illustrated by the following example. Assume that we have separated the fibers of a cloth; we shall then obtain yarn. Proceeding in this way, we shall obtain cotton from the yarn, which may be divided into infinitely small particles. Finally, we come to a situation where these small particles of cotton can no longer be divided. These infinitely small indivisible particles are called atoms, and their combinations make up the world.

Comparing the atomistic theories of Democritus and Kanada, we find considerable discrepancies between them. According to Democritus, atoms are indivisible, immutable, qualitatively homogeneous, and distinguished from one another only by their quantitative properties — form, size, order, and position. This was the basis for the deterministic theory of the universe, which insists that every event is the result of necessity, and there are no accidental objects or phenomena in the world.

Epicurus, who continued the line of Democritus, gave the atoms the property of having weight, postulating also that the atoms had not only vertical but also "swerve" motion or deviation from the straight line. Thus necessity was complemented with accident; the motion of atoms was recognised to be free.

According to Kanada's theory, each atom is qualitatively different from all others, possessing *visesa*, that is, unique specificity, of which there are as many varieties as there are atoms themselves.

According to Democritus, atoms are in eternal and continuous motion, whereas Kanada considers atoms to be immutable, inert, and devoid of inner motion. The motion of atoms, that is, their combination, separation and mechanical shifting, is due to external causes — the action of an external object. That is the "visual" cause. Apart from the visual (tangible or perceptible) cause, Kanada also postulates the existence of an invisible (*adrishta*) cause regarded as the ultimate cause of all atoms. The force of *adrishta* is natural, not divine.

Thus the Vaisesika atomistic theory should be described as a materialist one. Vaisesikas re-

cognised the materiality of the world, regarding man's reasoning (consciousness or mind) as the product of material atoms.

The Materialism of the Samkhya Philosophy[1]

The founder of the Samkhya philosophical system and the author of the Samkhya-sutra was, as is generally believed, Kapila (c. 6th-5th centuries B. C.). The Samkhya-sutra was lost, so that we have to use later sources — Isvarakrishna Sàmkhya Karika (3rd-4th centuries C. E.), Vacaspati Misra's Samkhya Tattva Kaumudi (9th century), and others.

Kapila's primary principle is that the world is material. Matter (*prakrti*) is the basis of everything that is, it is omnipresent, eternal, and one. The motion of *prakrti* is just as eternal as *prakrti* itself. Primordially, *prakrti* has no outside cause, for matter (*prakrti*) has neither beginning nor end. Kapila wrote that the world was not created, and therefore there was no creator; the world itself was the cause of the world; the world developed gradually.

Kapila recognised the objective nature of the cause-and-effect links in nature, self-development

[1] Indologists differ as to the origin of the name of this philosophical system. The word *samkhya* has two principal meanings: (1) count or computation; (2) profound meditation, reasoning, counting the pros and cons, struggle both in the intellectual and physical senses.

Taking into account the first meaning, Gough explains the name Samkhya from the fact that in this system the principles of the Upanisads were listed. We believe that the scholars who reckon with the second meaning (like S. Radhakrishnan, Ram Mohan Roy, and others), have a better case. The meanings of the word Samkhya is close to Gr. *philosophia, dialektike*.

of nature from the lower forms to the higher. The first *sloka* of the Samkhya-Karika says that there is continuity in the development of the world from the lower to the higher... Nothing can arise out of something that does not exist... There is a close tie between cause and effect. If that were not so, everywhere at any moment anything at all could arise. Each cause conditions a specific effect, and there can be no cause without an effect. The effect is always inseparable from the cause. Therefore any existence is conditioned. Kapila used the materialist doctrine of the cause-and-effect links to substantiate his atheism and to criticise the religion of Brahmanism. He wrote that, if the first cause is God (Brahma) and the world is the effect, there is a discrepancy between cause and effect. There can be, however, no discrepancy between cause and effect. The cause of this world is matter (*prakrti*). The universe is the result of modifications of matter.

As we see, Kapila uses the category of causality from the very start in the exposition of his philosophical views. That is not accidental. The point is that the positions of Samkhya on causality were the decisive premise which determined its philosophical orientation. In criticising Machism, Lenin pointed out: "The question of causality is particularly important in determining the philosophical line of any of the recent 'isms' ".[1] As we see it, this idea of Lenin's is entirely valid, methodologically, relative to some of the oldest "isms".

According to the Samkhya doctrine, everything

[1] V. I. Lenin, "Materialism and Empirio-Criticism", *Collected Works*, Vol. 14, p. 153.

(any phenomenon) has its material cause. All relations between cause and effect are conceived in the sense that the latter is always present in the former.[1] The following are the Samkhya arguments in favour of this.

There are two kinds of causes, material (in which the effect is latent) and efficient or productive (which helps the effect to manifest itself). If we accept, however, that the material cause does not contain the effect, the concept of "productive cause" loses its meaning, for it has no object of action.

Assuming that an effect arises out of a cause in which it is not contained is tantamount to asserting that existence arises out of nonexistence, or something emerges out of nothing.

An effect must be of the same nature as the cause; they have the same basis. A cloth may only be made out of yarn (not out of milk); curds may be made out of milk (rather than out of yarn), etc.

The theory that the effect exists before it manifests itself is called *Satkarya-vada*.[2]

Thus Samkhya asserts that there are no effects without causes. Everything in nature has a cause of its own, including body and soul, sensations and intellect, which are "limited and dependent objects".

Only "the cause of all causes and effects", that is, *prakrti* (matter), has no cause. "...The products are caused, while prakrti is uncaused; the products are dependent, while prakrti is independent; the products are many in number, limited in space and time, while prakrti is one, all-pervading and eternal."[1]

According to the Samkhya doctrine, prakrti consists of three forces or *gunas* — *sattva, rajas*, and *tamas*. *Sattva* is regarded as something light and illuminating; *rajas*, motivating and mobile; *tamas*, heavy and restraining. Analysis of the Samkhya Karika shows that in effect *sattva* is potential consciousness; *rajas*, the source of motion, action, and development; *tamas* is that which restrains action and slows down development. These three *gunas*, constituting the basis of any object or phenomenon, are inseparably connected and mutually condition one another. They are connected as closely as flame, oil, and lamp wick.

The *gunas* are a kind of primary principles — mass (*tamas*), energy (*rajas*), and the conscious principle (*sattva*).[2] Everything in nature is

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[1] Let us point out that Buddhists, Nyayiks and Vaisesikas adhere to another view of this question. They believe that the effect does not actually exist in the material cause. Their argument is that if the effect existed in the material cause, there would be no need for the efficient cause. (If, for instance, the pot actually exists in the clay, what is the potter for?). The theory (*vada*) that the effect does not exist in the material cause before it is produced is sometimes called *Arambha-vada*, that is, the theory of the origin of the new in the effect.

[2] Advaita Vedantists also adhere to the *Satkarya-vada*, with that essential difference that the transition of the cause into the effect is declared to be merely an appearance or illusion (*vivarta*). The following explanation is given here: if we saw a rope and took it for a snake, that does not mean that the rope had turned into a snake. Similarly, if Brahman created our universe, that does not mean that it actually became the universe that it created. Brahman (in this instance, cause) remains identical to itself and immutable, while the universe (in this case, effect) is merely appearance or illusion.

[1] S. Radhakrishnan, *op.cit.*, Vol. II, p. 260.

[2] S. Dasgupta (see *A History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, Cambridge, 1922, pp. 244-245) interprets *sattva* as "intelligence-stuff"; *rajas*, as "energy-stuff", and *tamas*, as "mass-stuff".

charged, as it were, with these three principles. The interaction between them consists in that energy cannot exist without mass, while conscious phenomena do not exist without energy. How does an object or phenomenon emerge or is shaped, then? The process begins with individual particles of the three forces, indifferently scattered through primary matter, being gathered together into wholes under the impact of natural affinity; this results in non-uniform pressure in various parts of matter, so that bodies distinct from one another are gradually formed instead of uniform indifferent matter.

The emergence or formation of some object or phenomenon does not signify creation of matter, in the same way as the disappearance of an individual object or phenomenon does not mean destruction of matter. In the process of evolution, nature does not increase or diminish quantitatively. Matter cannot be either created or destroyed. The sum total of all matter — of all its actual or potential states — always remains constant. The elements of matter are in eternal motion which cannot stop for a second even; any material process, any growth or withering away is nothing but redistribution of matter, its transition from the past into the present and from the present into the future, or from potentiality to actuality. Redistribution of mass and energy engenders the entire diversity of the material world, the world of plants and animals.

The idea that matter (mass and energy) does not grow or diminish quantitatively but is merely redistributed in the process of emergence and destruction of individual objects and phenomena of nature, can be regarded as one of the strokes of

genius of ancient Indian thinkers who anticipated later discoveries. In a most general form, this can be viewed as a distinct expression of the idea of the *law of conservation of the mass of substance* as it is known to modern natural science. It should be stressed at the same time that anticipation as one of the forms of perception of scientific truth was characteristic of many outstanding thinkers of antiquity. As Engels put it, thinkers of the past brilliantly anticipated countless numbers of truths whose correctness is now proved scientifically.

Matter and the laws of its evolutionary development are knowable. The ways or channels through which man receives knowledge of the objects and phenomena surrounding him are the five sense organs.

The entire infinite variety of matter is classified into five basic forms or essences: earth, water, fire, air, and ether. Samkhya regards the process of world manifestation as ordered development of matter from the finer forms to the most dense ones which are referred to as "material elements" (*mahabhuta*). These "essences" are similar to the Greek "elements", with the exception that what in Graeco-Roman philosophy is referred to as the "fifth essence" (*quintessentia*) is called the first essence, or spatiality (*akaca*) in Samkhya.

We do not set ourselves the task of considering the interconnections and mutual relations between the *gunas* and essences, although this question is of great interest both on the epistemological and ontological plane. But we should dwell, however briefly, on the relationship between the *gunas* and *prakrti*. The point is that Samkhya is the

first and probably the only philosophical school in India to make a serious attempt to formulate the philosophical concept of matter.

We know that there were materialists in Europe (such as Ludwig Feuerbach, for instance, who rejected the abstract speculations of Hegel) who negated the existence of matter as the being of "the general", calling it "an empty abstraction", and recognised matter only as the being of individual things. From this viewpoint, only individual things are genuinely material, like this house, this tree, these leaves, etc. That which is given in direct sense perception, that is, the individual sensual objects, is indeed material.[1] This view, however, was deficient in divorcing the singular from the general, violating as it did their dialectic unity.

Philosophers of the Samkhya school were also guilty of divorcing the singular from the general, but it is very important to point out that they recognised the reality of both. In their view, matter (*prakrti*) exists in two independent forms, one general and one singular, and that was where the metaphysical gap lay.

Matter of the first form ("the general") is substance, the first cause of the world of objects; in it, the *gunas* are in a state of equilibrium, and it is therefore without qualities, which prevents man

[1] This view has its sources in the nominalist tradition. In the Middle Ages nominalism, according to Marx, was the first expression of materialism which struggled against medieval scholasticism. The progressive thinkers of the 17th century (in particular Hobbes, Locke, and Spinoza in his theory of the individual things) also relied on nominalist principles in their fight against Aristotlean scholasticism. French materialists also turned to that tradition as an antidote to objective idealism.

from perceiving it through the senses. It is therefore incognisable, but the incognisability results from its fineness rather than from nonexistence.

Matter of the second form ("the singular") is an infinite number of moving objects, phenomena, and events developing in space and time. The singular is accessible to the sense organs, it is knowable.[1]

The stumbling block for the Samkhya authors was the question of the origin of consciousness. Ram Mohan Roy believes that *purusa* was created by Kapila as an explanation for the origin of consciousness.

According to Kapila, *purusa* is the omniscient and extremely fine element which, as distinct from *prakrti*, possesses consciousness. *Prakrti* is the object or matter; *purusa* is the subject or consciousness. There are grounds to believe that Kapila was fearful lest this proposition of his should be given an idealistic interpretation. As distinct from *atman*, said Kapila, *purusa* does not create anything, it is passive; it is merely a passive witness; only *prakrti* is active, and so on. *Prakrti* is the subject of action; in the process of spontaneous development it comes in contact with *purusa* and ultimately cognises itself; *purusa* is devoid of the ability for self-cognition.

The inconsistencies and errors of the Samkhya school relative to the origin and essence of consciousness were readily exploited already in antiquity by representatives of religious orthodoxy.

[1] *Pradhana* — *prakrti* in the state of equilibrium of the *gunas* — is just as unknowable as the Kantian thing-in-itself. *Prakrti* is knowable only in the state of nonequilibrium of the *gunas*, that is, what is knowable here is the dynamics of the *gunas* rather than *pradhana*; the transition from pure potentiality (*avyaktam*) to actuality (*vyaktam*) is cognised.

In the Middle Ages, Gaudapada, Vacaspati Misra and other commentators (or followers) of Kapila's doctrine made further concessions to idealism, recognising the existence of souls independent of matter.

On the whole, an inconsistent position on this score gave rise to reproaches on the part of idealists for concessions to materialism as well as on the part of materialistically-minded Indian philosophers. Thus S. Radhakrishnan criticises Kapila for deviation from idealism: "If we admit the Samkhya view of prakrti and its complete independence of purusa, then it will be impossible to account for the evolution of prakrti. We do not know how latent potentialities become fruitful without any consciousness to direct them."[1]

Ram Mohan Roy holds an opposite view of the Samkhya philosophy, indicating that its weakness lies in negating the historicity of development. Had the Samkhya philosophy asserted that at a definite stage in the development of the world, consciousness (*chaitanya*) arises out of things, while quantitative changes, reaching a certain phase of development, become qualitative changes producing new qualities, then the whole inconsistency (*asangati*) would have disappeared. Correctly criticising the anti-historical (metaphysical) quality of the Samkhya philosophy, Roy regrettably commits an error himself, comparing Kapila's materialism to that of the French philosophers of the 18th century. The point is that the French materialism of the 18th century was a historical product of a qualitatively different epoch, and of a different class; it was different in its content.

[1] S. Radhakrishnan, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 326.

Such is a brief characteristic of the materialism of the Samkhya school.

The Elements of Materialism in Jainism[1]

In the light of the problem considered here, the most valuable materials are to be found in the Jainist doctrine of being.

The basic premise of Jainism is that the ultimate basis of all that is is substance, which can be extended and unextended.[2] Extended substance, in its own turn, is divided into living (*jiva*) and non-living (*ajiva*). The living substances, or the souls (*jivas*) have consciousness; these are the "subjects" in the philosophical sense, so to speak[3]. Non-living substances (*ajivas*) or objects are matter (*pudgala*)[4], space, time, *dharma* (the condition of motion) and *adharma* (the condition of rest).

[1] What we have in mind here is not the religion of Jainism but rather the idealist philosophical system that took shape in the 6th-2nd centuries B. C.

[2] Unextended substance is not considered in detail in Jainism. It is merely said to be "eternal, infinite, immobile, and amorphous".

[3] The word *jiva* is used in different meanings in Jaina works: it denotes life, vitality, consciousness, and soul. *Jivas* are countless and varied. Because they recognised universal animateness of nature, Jainists worked out a classification of the souls (*jivas*) according to the criterion of "degree and kind of consciousness". For instance, the lowest class comprises the least perfect souls (in which consciousness is dormant) inhabiting the earth, water, fire, air, and plants (see Umasvama. Tattvarthadhigama-sutra, 2.22). Next come the souls of the animal world and man.

[4] *Pudgala* —"that which is susceptible to combination and separation".

Matter (*pudgala*) is, according to Jainists, an eternal substance indefinite in terms of quality and quantity. It may grow and diminish in volume without addition or detraction of particles or elements; it may take any form and develop any qualities. Matter is the carrier of energy possessing two kinds of motion — simple or general motion (*porishpondon*) and the motion of gradual development or evolution. *Pudgala* is thus the physical basis of the world.

Everything that emerges, exists, and is destroyed, is referred to as material body by Jainists. The quantity of matter always remains the same ("it does not change"); what is changed are the material bodies, the things. The cause of the changes is contradiction or "differences in the identity" (*bhedabheda*).

Jainists recognise two kinds of changes: (1) loss of old qualities[1] (*gunas*) and acquisition of new ones; (2) change of form. Changes in the world are due to disintegration or merging and combination of atoms.

Jainists worked out an atomistic theory of the structure of the universe. All physical objects, according to that theory, are the result of combination of gross and fine atoms (*pramana*). An individual atom (*anu*) is believed to be an infinitesimal quantity which has weight, however. Potentially, an atom contains the whole thing; in other words, potentially it has taste, smell, colour, temperature, and tangibility. Because of the property of tangibility, homogeneous atoms are merged, which ultimately results in the formation of

[1] Jainists believed the primary qualities to be six in number: existence, pleasure, substantiality, cognisability, identity, and ability to have form.

an object or phenomenon.[1] Atoms also have such properties as being eternal, infinite, uncreated and indestructible. Consequently, matter also has these qualities, being an agglomeration of atoms.

In comparing the Jaina atomistic theory with that of Lucretius, one observes that Jainists believed each atom to have two kinds of qualities, primary and secondary, while Lucretius attributed only one quality to it, the primary one. The secondary quality emerges, according to Lucretius, from the merging or combination of atoms.

One of the major differences between the atomistic views of ancient Greeks and Indians is that the Greeks endeavoured to explain quality in terms of quantity, while Indians did the reverse, explaining quantity in terms of quality.

Jainists believe *karma* to be material (*pudgalika*). In their view, *karma* represents matter in intangible form.

The Philosophy of Buddhism

Along with Christianity and Islam, Buddhism is known to be one of the three most widespread religions. The adherents of Buddhism have always endeavoured to give a profound philosophical substantiation to their teaching. Buddhism, however, is not exceptional in this sense: in India, many representatives of the dominant ideology have always believed that philosophy is the theoretical substantiation of religion, while religion is practical philosophy.

[1] The merging of atoms in aggregate states (*skandhas*) takes the following form: two atoms comprise a double *skandha*; a triple *skandha* is formed by the addition of still another atom (*anu*) to a double *skandha*; in the same way a fourth etc. are formed.

Buddhism strove to replace Brahmanism, the religion of early slave-owning society in ancient India.

Brahmanism, as is well known, sanctified the estate structure of society (its division into the *varnas*) and the dominant position of Brahman priests, who by that time became an impediment to social progress. Brahmans declared themselves to be above all other men and imposed on everybody a complicated sacrificial ritual which accompanied nearly every step a person made on this earth. They taught that in this as well as in the next world happiness could only be obtained through sacrifices of cattle, food, and melted butter to fire.

Buddhism rose against these senseless sacrifices and, in the first place, against him to whom the sacrifices were offered—against the God Brahma, declaring him to be non-existent. The cult of someone who never existed is truly meaningless.[1] To deal a final blow to Brahmans and the institute of their property, Buddhists spoke against any property whatever and against the boundaries between the estates. In this connection they attacked the Brahmans' teaching of the soul: there is no soul, for if one admits the existence of a soul as an individual, there must also be personal property (where there is a self, there must be personal property).

Reflecting as it did the dissatisfaction of the free commoners and the lower urban castes, which were ruined and oppressed, Buddhism succeeded in winning the support of many oppressed people suffering from lack of rights, poverty, and

[1] Although Buddhism was at its birth a religion without a god, later Siddhartha-Buddha himself was deified and declared to be a god. Moreover, there emerged the teaching of the coming to earth of a great number of gods or superhuman beings (the Boddhisattva).

hunger. In referring to early Buddhism, it should be noted that it succeeded, under the definite socio-historical conditions of the times, in expressing in a specific form the aspirations of the people for a better life.

The sacred texts of the Buddhists were gathered and given final shape some two centuries after Gotama Buddha's death. They were called *Tri-Pritaka* (Three Baskets). Buddhism as a system is heterogeneous; there is a great number of schools, trends, and directions in it. However, the way to an understanding of all numerous Buddhist doctrines lies through comprehending their philosophical basis.

Some scholars endeavouring to discover the essence of Buddhism proceeded from a consideration of the sutras—collections of aphorisms. But the sutras are very laconic, compressed; their aphorisms are abstract and unconnected, and this obscures the general meaning of the teaching, creating an almost unlimited possibility of arbitrary interpretations. Buddhists themselves interpreted the sutras in the light of some philosophical treatise (*Abhidharma*) or other. *Abhidharma* is the key to the knowledge of the Buddhist doctrine and the history of Buddhist sects, schools, and institutions. Without a knowledge of *Abhidharma*, it is easy to fall prey to artificial constructions. Some time in the past a kind of "pure Buddhist" standard was established, relative to which all other forms of this religion were declared to be a distortion, shamanism, etc. The result was that Buddhism had never taught much of what was imputed to it by its adversaries and what attracted many of its followers.

The division of Buddhism into schools and sects began as early as the 4th century B. C. The common foundation of all Buddhist trends is this: the ultimate

goal of life is salvation; ethical and religious experiences are the means of attaining that goal. To put it in modern terms, the ancient Buddhist atomistic theory assumed from the very outset a peculiar historical form of relativism. According to this theory, the whole of the world of things and phenomena surrounding man and man himself with his psyche and consciousness consist of atoms. But the atoms are not substantive; they are not the primary elements which exist eternally and whose essence is immutable. The world consists of an unlimited number of qualities (things, objects, and phenomena). Each individual quality's existence has a beginning and an end. Compared to eternity, the length of life of each quality taken separately is an infinitesimal quantity. Any quality is in this sense a flare. Each atom of which every quality consists is also an instantaneous flare (that is exactly the sense in which atoms are not substantial).[1]

Thus Buddhism does not recognise qualitative definiteness of objects and phenomena. This qualitative definiteness is illusory, for it does not exist in reality. Only infinitesimal (in magnitude and time) states (moments or "flares") exist, the carriers of which are *dharmas* ("carriers"), and we therefore cannot speak of any object or phenomenon as the subject of existence, that is, we cannot say that they actually exist.

Just as the light of a lamp appears a moving object to the observer, whereas in actual fact there is a new flare of light at each given moment, any other material element (e.g. colours, sounds, tastes, scents, and tactile impressions) is nothing but a chain of repeating flares.

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[1] Buddhists do not recognise spiritual substance either.

The philosophical foundation of Buddhism is the theory of *dharmas*.[1] According to that theory, all that is, all nature is a single stream, a whirlwind consisting of elements (atoms). The life span of an element is infinitesimal or momentaneous ("a flare"), and everything which consists of them will sooner or later cease to exist, but that which really exists cannot cease. Therefore all phenomena of nature, both material and spiritual, cannot be called genuinely real being. The elements have their carrier, *dharma*, the eternal and immutable substance, which is the genuinely real being or essence of all phenomena.

There is no generally accepted view among Buddhists concerning the nature of that essence.

Sarvastivadins,[2] for instance, visualise it as a personal carrier (*dharma*) for each of the elements (75 varieties of *dharmas* are believed to exist, all in all). According to Yogacaras[3] the whirlwind of elements of which the "illusory" internal and external life consists does not go back to a substantial carrier in the case of each element; there are no such carriers; all elements follow from a single common essence, from a "consciousness treasury".

The Madhyama school of Sunyavada[4] adhered to a third view. The founder of that school, Nagarjuna (1st-2nd centuries C. E.), believed that Sarvastivadins and Yogacaras went to extremes and that their approach was one-sided. Generally speaking, all objects and phenomena of the surrounding world,

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[1] *Dhar* means to "accept" or "espouse"; *Dharma* — "carrier".

[2] The adherents of the materialist trend in Buddhist philosophy.

[3] The adherents of the subjectivist-idealist trend in Buddhist philosophy.

[4] *Sunyavada* — a teaching on the void.

he asserted, can be approached from four standpoints:

(1) *"That"*[1] *is*, for we see it, hear it, touch it, smell it, or taste it, that is, perceive it in one way or another through our sense organs. In short, *"that" exists* (absolute *being*).

(2) *"That" is not* (absolute *non-being*), for that is ephemeral, transient, dependent on another "that", changes with each passing moment ("flash"), passes into another state, becoming some other "that"; the latter becomes a third "that"; etc, etc. *ad infinitum* ("the eternal stream or whirlwind").

(3) *"That simultaneously is and is not*, i. e., it both exists and does not exist.

(4) *"That" neither is nor is not*, i. e., it neither exists nor does not exist.

Declaring all these viewpoints to be one-sided and non-genuine. Nagarjuna formulated his own theory in opposition to them, which he termed the *theory of dependent origin (pratitya-samutpada)*. According to this theory, only that object truly exists which exists by itself, that is, is not caused by some outside factor.

However, life shows that there are no phenomena without causes in the world around us, there are no absolutely independent things. The existence of any object or phenomenon of the material world always *depends* on certain conditions that are not directly connected with the object itself. What reality can we speak of, says Nagarjuna, when everywhere and at all time *that exists and this appears, the emergence of that produces this*. Dependent reality is no reality.

In replying to his opponents who hold that the

[1] Some object or phenomenon of nature or the whole of the material world.

world is real, as testified by our everyday experiences and reasoning, Nagarjuna says: experience and reason do not give us genuine knowledge. The evidence or data of our *pramanas* (the means of proof — sensations, perceptions, and syllogisms) is unreliable, for, to assert that the given perception is true we have to point out something which is true and distinct from this perception. But is that "something" true, in its turn? That will require proof. For that "something else", if it is not true in itself, cannot make our perception true. But how are we to prove the truth of the "something else"? We shall require the existence of a third "something else", whose truth will have to be proved in its turn, etc.— the series is endless.

Nagarjuna wrote that the foundation of all that is cannot be said to exist (absolute being) and neither can it be said not to exist (absolute non-being); it is something intermediate (*madhyama*)[1], amorphous, without cause, incomprehensible, and inexpressible, the only suitable word for it being the void (*sunya*). There is no *dharma* that is not *sunya*. But that is not needless emptiness, it is not a mystic nothing leading to nihilism.

S. Radhakrishnan,[2] as well as S. Chatterjee and D. Datta who concur with him, believes that, according to the Madhyamika view, "behind this phenomenal world there is a reality which is not describable by any character, mental or nonmental, that we perceive".[3] True, we would prefer to avoid using

[1] Hence the name *Madhyamikas*, followers of the middle path. See also the Buddhist source *Samyutta Nikaya* " 'Everything is' is one extreme. 'Everything is not' is another extreme. The truth is in the middle." Truth is the coming into being without end.

[2] S. Radhakrishnan, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 659 et al.

[3] S. Chatterjee and D. Datta, *An Introduction to Indian Philosophy*, University of Calcutta, 1950, p. 146.

Kantian terminology here ("phenomenal" etc.), for that is fraught with the danger of modernisation and a loss of the specificity of the Madhyamika doctrine; but the ascertaining of the fact that the Madhyamikas interpreted *sunya* as objective reality is of fundamental importance.

Thus *sunya* is objective, if transcendental, reality, the basis of unity (in Nagarjuna's terms, "coincidence") of matter and spirit, of object and subject, motion and rest, form and content, the singular and the general, the finite and the infinite. The dialectics of the general, particular and singular, of essence and phenomenon, etc. was the stumbling block for the Madhyamikas as well as many other ancient philosophers; they spared no effort to find a solution for this problem but failed.

In accordance with the division of all that is into two worlds — the world of phenomena (*samsara*) and the world of essence (*sunya*), the Madhyamikas based their epistemology on the existence of two truths, empirical (*samvrti-satya*), valid for the phenomenal world, and transcendental (*paramartha-satya*), valid for the *sunya*. They took notice of the antinomies of human cognition, the contradictoriness of concepts and the objective basis of this contradictoriness, but here, just as on the ontological plane, they failed to attain the dialectical level in handling the problem.

In is important to note that, although Nagarjuna uses such terms as "inexpressible", "unmanifested", "unknowable" relative to *sunya* as the "third" or "middle", he believes that *paramartha-satya* ("transcendental" truth) can be cognised, and the only way toward its cognition is knowledge of *samvrti-satya* ("practical" truth). As S. Radhakrishnan writes, according to the Madhyamikas "knowledge cannot

be vindicated, even as the knowledge of phenomenon or appearance, if it were absolutely severed from the knowledge of noumenal reality. Nagarjuna points out that without resorting to practical truth the transcendental truth cannot be attained."[1]

* * *

We have discussed mostly the progressive aspects of the philosophical systems known as Nyaya, Vaisesika, Samkhya, early Jainism and Buddhism, their materialist tendencies and in particular their atomistic theories. This "one-sidedness" is due, above all, to the need for showing, if only in outline, that there is a solid materialist and progressive tradition in India.

The atomistic theories of ancient Indians, just as those of other peoples of the remote past, reflected in the first place the confrontation between materialism and idealism, between dialectics and metaphysics. They were principally directed against the religious view of the world as a derivative of God the creator. "The Atomists," wrote Lenin, "are ... generally speaking, opposed to the idea of the creation and maintenance of the world by means of a foreign principle. It is in the theory of atoms that natural science first feels released from the need for demonstrating a foundation for the world. For if nature is represented as created and held together by another, then it is conceived of as not existent in itself..."[2]

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[1] S. Radhakrishnan, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 659.

[2] V. I. Lenin, "Conspectus of Hegel's Book *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*", *Collected Works*, Vol. 38, p. 264.

Yoga

A philosophical and sociological analysis of the theory and practice of Yoga will be given in the chapter on Vivekananda. Here we shall limit ourselves to a general characteristic of this school and its doctrine, and a consideration of the views of Patanjali (c. 2nd century B. C.), the systematiser of Yoga ideas and founder of this school, concerning the problem of man.

The Sanskrit word *yoga* is used to denote a method for freeing oneself from fetters and oppression; uniting, combining, consolidating, contracting; and a method for attaining unity, consolidation, etc. In prehistoric India this word was apparently used to denote causes and actions producing human suffering.

Throughout the centuries, dozens of Yoga doctrines and schools took shape, of which only 19 are believed to be independent and original.

In various Yoga schools the word *yoga* came to denote different phenomena and actions. Some regarded Yoga as a method of freeing oneself from suffering; others, as uniting man's individual soul with the absolute soul, *atman*, which, in their view, would mean the end of suffering; while still others saw Yoga as the process of separating *purusa* (consciousness) from *prakrti* (matter) and as the end of that process, that is, their separation itself, which simultaneously means release.

The Yoga-sutra (A Manual of Yoga) is the first major work of the Indian school of Yoga, which presents in the form of aphorisms the principles of Yogic teaching and also some practical advice (precepts) for attaining the ultimate aim of Yoga — liberating the soul from the bondage of the material

world, including one's own body. It is believed that the author of the Yoga-sutra was Patanjali. For this reason the Yoga-sutra is sometimes called Patanjali-sutra, Patanjali's Yoga Aphorisms, etc.

The Yoga-sutra is divided into four parts (*pada*): *the first part* is called *Samadhipada* and discusses the nature and goals of *samadhi*, or contemplative self-immersion; *the second part, Sadhanapada*, defines the means for attaining that goal; *the third part, Vibhutapada*, describes the inner aspects of Yoga and the significance of the extraordinary ("supernatural") abilities attained by Yoga; *the fourth part, Kaivalyapada*, deals with the nature and forms of "release".

In actual fact, Yoga is not a philosophy. Both in the remote past and at present Yoga is usually regarded as a definite practice of which the methodological foundation is the Samkhya philosophical doctrine. Evidence for this is found, for instance, in *Bhagavad Gita* (Chapter 5), which was written several centuries before Patanjali's school came into existence. "The region of high rest which Samkhyans reach Yogins attain. Who sees these twain as one sees with clear eyes!"

According to the Samkhya doctrine, the world is material. Matter (*prakrti*) is the ultimate basis of all that is, it is eternal and one. The motion of *prakrti* is just as eternal as *prakrti* itself. The emergence of formation of any object or phenomenon does not signify creation of matter, just as the destruction of an individual object or phenomenon does not signify destruction of matter. Matter cannot be either created or destroyed. The totality of matter in all its actual and potential states remains constant. Patanjali comprehended and interpreted the Samkhya philosophy in the spirit of dualism: the material

(*prakrti*) and the spiritual (*purusa*) are regarded as opposed principles that cannot be reduced to each other.

Know thou that Nature and Spirit both
Have no beginning! Know that qualities
And changes of them are by Nature wrought;
That Nature puts to work the acting frame,
But Spirit doth inform it, and so cause
Feeling of pain and pleasure. Spirit, linked
To moulded matter, entereth into bond
With qualities by nature framed, and, thus
Married to matter, breeds the birth again
In good and evil *yonis*.
Yet is this —
Yea! in its bodily prison!— Spirit pure
Spirit supreme; surveying, governing,
Guarding, possessing; Lord and Master still
PURUSHA, Ultimate, One soul with me.

(*Bhagavad Gita*, Chapter 13).

Under certain circumstances, material and spiritual principles may be interconnected, penetrating each other and forming infinitely diverse shapes, qualities, and systems. Man (a combination of body and soul) is one of the highest and most complicated material-spiritual combinations (systems). The individual human soul (*purusa*) as a part of an absolute spiritual reality (*atman*) is immortal. Birth and death should be regarded from this viewpoint as changes in matter but not at all as "changes in ourselves" (in the soul). There is no death, there is "eternal" (very large or long) circle (reincarnation or *samsara*). However, large and long as the circle may be, it can arrive at an end or completion. The cycles of reincarnations performed by the soul — "departure" for the other side (for *atman*) and "return" to earthly life, another departure and another return, etc., may ultimately end in the so-called full release (*moksa* or, in Buddhism, *nirvana*). That means that the soul attains through an enormous number of reincarnations a degree of purity from matter (*prakrti*) that after one of the departures to the other side it remains there, merging with the absolute spiritual reality and "being lost in it like a drop of water in an ocean".

Patanjali was one of the first ancient thinkers to formulate and elaborate on the idea that man is a system ("microcosm", or "the universe in miniature") consisting of four basic components — mineral, vegetable, animal, and human proper. Patanjali endows each of the components of man the system with objective existence, regarding them as independent entities. Accordingly, we should distinguish four levels or subsystems in man:

mineral man;
vegetable man;
animal man;
human man.

(1) *Mineral man*. At this level, man is regarded as a subsystem consisting entirely of the material of the mineral kingdom. The mineral kingdom is taken to mean here the whole of the inorganic world, the whole of the universe, including the "inanimate bodies" of this planet. On the earth and in space, all material bodies, from a sand grain on the shore of an ocean to the visible and invisible bodies of cosmic space, are interconnected, naturally emerging (breathing out) out of One (*ekam*) and naturally returning (breathing in) into One.

That One breathed by itself without breath,
other than it there has been nothing.

The mineral kingdom has always been in motion:

All this was indistinguishable, fluid...
Everything was in motion.

The initial source of the activity of the mineral man subsystem should also be sought for here. To understand the true essence of mineral man and determine the measure of his activity ("viability"), he should be considered in his relationships and interconnections with the environment consisting of an infinite series of large-scale and small-scale systems. The integrity and well-being of our human mineral subsystem depends, according to Patanjali, on the precision of our observance of the laws of the mineral kingdom. The mineral kingdom has a specific rhythm of life. On the planet Earth, the seasons change, the time of the day or night, and the rhythms of mineral life change accordingly. The rhythms have to be felt and known; they have to be complied with, for they ultimately determine the rhythms of man's entire life and activity in all its manifestations at all subsystem levels. The action of the cosmic forces and the rhythms of terrestrial and extra-terrestrial mineral life determine, for instance, the order of taking nourishment, that is, the order of "mineral fertilisation" of the human man. Inasmuch as man is the universe in miniature, *all* minerals of the universe without exception must enter his body. In this sense, man must be an *omnivorous* being, that is to say, any limitations on the variety of foodstuffs are counter-indicated. There can be only one limitation: *moderation*. As for

vegetarianism or dietetic nourishment, these are special cases (for sick persons mostly) and should only be recommended by a specialist (a doctor). The seasons signify and entail changes not only in the rhythm of terrestrial life in the broad sense but also in the rhythm of taking sustenance, and changes in the diet.[1]

In characterising mineral man, it should be remembered that we do not deal with a simple combination of minerals. Mineral man is the highest product of the mineral kingdom, a living and active human subsystem subordinated to the laws of life and activity of man the system (human man). Raising mineral man to an absolute, that is, regarding him as an independent essence, Patanjali gives the following characteristic of his activity: he is alive, and yet he is passive, lazy, performing acts through force of habit, that is, he is only capable of doing that which he has been trained to do. It should be borne in mind at the same time that the "personality characteristic" of mineral man depends largely on objective causes. The objective causes are taken to

[1] Let us note, in passing, that raising the question of the role of rhythms in the universe and in man's life may be viewed as one of the brilliant anticipations of the ancient thinkers. Throughout the whole of the subsequent historical period, both in India and outside India, this guess concerning one of the most universal laws of the universe (along with the idea of universal cause-and-effect connections, of motion being an attribute of matter, of the mutual dependence of matter and consciousness, etc.) was substantiated and developed in science, art, and other forms of man's theoretical and practical activity. For instance, in art, the problem of rhythm in composition (in fine arts, architecture, fiction, music, theatre, cinema, etc.) remains the pivotal problem of creativity even now; in sociology we deal with the rhythms of the epoch; in production activity, with the rhythms of the work of enterprises, etc. We believe that this problem merits special consideration.

mean the natural environment which, according to Patanjali, should be viewed systemically: the human man system is part of the planet Earth system, the planet Earth system is part of the universe system, etc. Astrologists worked out special theories of causal dependence (and, to a certain degree, of predetermination) of the human man system (in the first place of the mineral subsystem) on the higher material systems. That was the basis for the horoscopes. As for the subjective causes, they emerge in the subsystem connections in the human man system.

(2) *Vegetable man.* With the mineral kingdom as its foundation, a higher organisation of matter, the vegetable kingdom, emerges. The vegetable world is linked with the mineral basis not only through origin. It reaches with its roots into the soil consisting of minerals, it holds on to it firmly, extracting nourishment from it. It is linked with extra-terrestrial "mineral organisations"— the sun, the moon, the stars.

Vegetable life differs essentially from the life of minerals. First, plants are capable of *reproducing themselves*, bearing fruit and multiplying. *Living matter proper is something that is capable of multiplying and producing offspring.* Therein animate beings differ from inanimate things. A plant is the first form of living matter in the proper sense. Second, plants are more "active and enterprising" as compared to mineral systems. In India, for instance, wild plants can cover and destroy within a short period of time an abandoned house and even a town. Third, *the rhythm of the life of plants is different.* Plants respond in a different way to changes in the seasons and the time of day or night.

The vegetable man subsystem should be regarded in the first place as the finest and most mobile prod-

uct of the vegetable world. The human man must know and remember this constantly. With reference to the problem of nourishment, for instance, the human man should under all circumstances take into account his "vegetable man" essence. Changes of seasons entail corresponding changes in the mineral structure of plants. Thus meals consisting of plants (fruits, vegetables, mushrooms, berries) should include only those in season. The main drawback of the vegetable man subsystem is that it does not cultivate itself. The ability for "tending oneself" and aspiration towards self-perfection emerges at a higher stage — the animal stage.

(3) *Animal man.* The animal, as a higher organisation of matter compared to the mineral and vegetable systems, could only arise in a highly developed mineral and vegetable kingdom. It imbibes the "refined product" of both. Patanjali stressed that the distinctive feature of the animal as a higher form of the living is its *mobility.* The ability to move (walk, crawl, run, jump, fly, etc.) enables the animal to enter upon most diverse links and relationships with the surrounding world. The form of activity is changed in a radical way. The animal can escape from an unfavourable factor by running away or, on the contrary, it may use favourable factors for satisfying its needs. Gradually, through selective overcoming of the environment, the animal works out a certain order in its behaviour. As it encounters the objects and phenomena of the external environment, the animal, in Patanjali's words, "learns to think" of what it has seen, to remember it, to become conscious of various situations and, accordingly, to introduce correctives in its behaviour. Even a tiny puppy will look at the end of a bench and feel that he must not walk further. The

animal's ability to find and achieve much of what is desirable and necessary in life, in which its ability for overcoming obstacles is manifested, was called cunning by Patanjali. "All animals have cunning." The animal man, as a subsystem of the human man, includes or synthesises the basic properties of the two lower subsystems, the mineral man and the vegetable man.

(4) *Human man.* This highest subsystem is a synthesis and harmony of mineral man, vegetable man, and animal man. The vital properties of the systems being synthesised ("mineral pleasure", "vegetable pushing", and "animal cunning") become human here.

At the "human man" level, an individual *spiritual* subsystem called *purusa* (the soul) is introduced into the individual *material* subsystem. *Purusa* is part of *atman* (the world soul). *Purusa* as the individual soul enlivens the human man, endowing him with reason and making him capable of cognising, reasoning, thinking, and acting in accordance with the convictions that are formed in him. *Owing to purusa, the activity of the human man rises to the highest level, the level of spirituality, for it becomes endowed with reason and soul.* The human man's potential is incomparably greater than that of any of the material subsystems listed above or that of all of them taken together.

The human man generalises the life experiences accumulated by generations and assimilates the surrounding world, gradually freeing himself from the power of the spontaneous laws of nature. *He begins to act on the environment himself, changing it and subordinating it to his interests and needs.* He tills the soil, breeds cattle and practises various crafts. He can, for instance, take wild flowers and

cultivate them, making them into a charming garden. He studies himself, directing his own life and cultivating himself. *He may cognise the laws of nature, the laws of life, not letting his future to become the product of chance.* In general, Patanjali concludes, the genuinely human life begins at the stage when inevitability disappears, the blind power of necessity ceases to rule, and the soul shakes off the fetters of *prakrti* (matter), thus becoming free.

We see that Patanjali's approach to man is cosmic and individual rather than social. From this standpoint, human society is a system consisting of the sum total of "individual systems", that is, of persons, or "human men". Formulating this theory in modern terms, we should stress that social life (human society and its history) are considered in it as a mechanical agglomeration of individuals rather than as a specific form of the motion of matter (or "social organism"), and the essence of man is viewed as an abstraction inherent in a separate individual. In actual fact, as is well known, the essence of man is the totality of all the social relations. At the time in which Patanjali lived, he did not and could not know that, so he had to ignore the course of human history and assume the existence of an abstract isolated human individual ("human man") connected with other similar individuals only with natural bonds on the plane of the spirit. It is therefore not at all surprising that, according to Patanjali, the theory of the laws and destinies of man's earthly life is the province of astrology. Patanjali was not without support in this belief. As we have pointed out above, astrology was a separate branch of knowledge in ancient India, and astrologers compiled all kinds of horoscopes predicting the future of individuals from the position of celestial bodies.

As we have seen, characteristic of Patanjali is a the systems approach. For him, man is a self-moving, self-organised and self-directed system. There is, we believe, profound rational meaning in this approach, not to be missed by the modern science of man.

Vedanta

Vedanta (Sanskr. "the end of the Vedas") is an objective-idealist system (school). The supposed author of the Braham-sutra is Badarayana. Historians of Indian philosophy believe that the Braham-sutra was compiled between the 5th and the 2nd centuries B. C. Fraser puts the date at c. 4th century B. C. Some European Indologists (Ritter, Jakobi, and others) believe the Braham-sutra to date from the 7th-5th centuries B. C. Arthur Keith insists that Badarayana lived not later than the 2nd century B. C.

In the Braham-sutra, Badarayana endeavoured to systematise from objective-idealist positions certain isolated philosophical ideas contained in the Upanisads. The Braham-sutra consists of four chapters. The first chapter discusses the theory of Brahman and explains its nature and relation to the world and the individual soul. The second chapter contains a critique of the theoretical opponents of the Vedanta — Charvakas, Jainists, Buddhists, and others. The third chapter deals with the ways and means (*sadhana*) of attaining Brahma-vidya (knowledge of Brahman). Contained in it are explanations of reincarnations, psychological and teleological discourses, etc. Chapter 4 considers the results of Brahma-vidya.

The Braham-sutra consists of 555 sutras each of which contains two or three words. The sutras are rather vaguely worded and offer possibilities for

extremely varied interpretations. The theory of the Vedanta was elaborated in commentaries each of which endeavoured to prove its compatibility with the texts of divine revelations (*sruti*) and the sutras. The authors of the principal commentaries (Samkara, Ramanuja, Madhva, Vallabha) were founders of independent Vedanta schools.

The first systematiser of the Vedanta philosophy was, as is generally accepted, Gaudapada (c. 3rd-7th centuries B. C.). His Mandukya Karika is partially a commentary on the Mandukya Upanisad, but on the whole it is an original philosophical work. Gaudapada was greatly influenced by Buddhist writers, particularly the Madhyamikas, though he used the term Brahman for Nagarjuna's *sunyata*.

Mandukya Karika consists of four parts. The first part is a commentary on the Mandukya Upanisad. Recognising the identity of Brahman and *atman*, Gaudapada characterises "the order of reality", or the four aspects (states) of *atman: vais-vanara-atman* — *atman* as world consciousness in a waking state; *taijasa-atman* — *atman* in the state of sleep accompanied by dreams; *susupty-atman* — *atman* as consciousness in the state of deep sleep unaccompanied by dreams; *prapan-copasaman* — *atman* as consciousness outside the limits of all perception, relation, reasoning, definition, expression, etc., that is, one that is characterised by extinction of phenomenal reality and constitutes the genuine nature of *atman*. The second chapter of the Mandukya Karika is devoted to proving the unreality of the world of experience. The third chapter considers in detail the Maya idea. The fourth chapter contains a continuation of the proof of the fact that the only reality is *atman*, uncreated, unalterable, immobile, immaterial. As for materiality,

mutability, etc., all of that is mere appearance.

The basic propositions of Gaudapada's epistemology are as follows: the world perceived by man in his waking hours is just unreal and illusory as during sleep; in the final analysis, there is no difference between the objects of experience and the ideas of these objects; both are equally illusory.

The major commentator of the Vedanta-sutra was Samkara (the 8th-9th centuries), and he may rightly be referred to as the founder of Advaita (non-dualist Vedanta).

Samkara believed that the foundation of all the phenomena of nature and society is an absolute, that is, a spiritual reality which is designated by the terms Brahman, *atman*, or Brahman-*atman*. Brahman is eternal, infinite, and amorphous; the categories of time and space, cause and effect, motion and rest, quantity and quality do not apply here. These categories, according to Samkara's teaching, are only characteristic of the world of phenomena, of nature and matter (*prakrti*).

How can the world, limited by certain boundaries and the cause-and-effect connection, be born of the infinite and causeless Brahman? In answer to this question Samkara said that only Brahman really exists, while the world of phenomena is merely the dreams and illusions of Brahman. Just as human dreams are in man's consciousness, so Brahman's dreams are in Brahman itself. There is no difference between Brahman and its manifestation, in this sense. At the same time there is no identity between them.

According to Samkara, Brahman eternally remains itself and cannot become "another", it cannot "transform itself" into anything, e. g., into the objects and phenomena of this world. If that were

possible, we would cognise absolute Brahman through knowledge of the objects and phenomena of the world surrounding us. But that would contradict the basic principle of the essence of Brahman.[1] If we assume, on the other hand, that Brahman does not manifest itself in this world wholly and entirely, but only partially, that will also have to be ruled out, for Brahman has no parts.

We see that the stumbling block of the inner logic of Samkara's proof is the attempt to speak of the Absolute while remaining within the reference frame of the concrete world "on this side".

The connection between Brahman and this world should, in Samkara's view, be regarded as the relation between an object and its properties ("the ocean and its waves") rather than as the relation between the whole and its parts. Our world is "Brahman's sleep" sometimes called Maya and sometimes matter, (*prakrti*). Maya is neither real nor unreal; it is appearance, or the "waves, bubbles and foam" concealing the Absolute, Brahman, from our view. There is water in the ocean, and we believe this water to be identical and one and the same (*abhinna*). In reality, however, water has many forms. It is due to the variety of forms of water that the waves, bubbles and foam are born in the ocean. Brahman and the world are one in the same way as the ocean is one, although it takes various forms — waves, bubbles, and foam. Thus our world (Maya), though founded on the Absolute, is not itself an absolute, and, as it has no substantive basis of its own, it cannot be true.

[1] Samkara objects to any attempts to conceive the Absolute in the mind. The real is, in his view, outside of phenomena, and truth, outside of reasoning.

In this connection Samkara speaks of two objects of cognition — our world and Brahman.[1] Our world is cognised through *avidya*. That is a form of sensory and logical cognition which yields relative empirical truth (*aparavidya*). *Avidya* does not reveal the substantive basis of things; it is in this sense lack of knowledge, ignorance, or untrue knowledge. Samkara says that, just as we perceive a rope as a snake through optical error, so we take Brahman, through *avidya*, for the world. *Avidya*, or lower wisdom, is opposed to *vidya*, or higher wisdom, which cognises the substance (Brahman) directly and gives man absolute truth (*paravidya*). *Avidya* disappears when *vidya* sets in.

The next major stage in the many centuries of the development of the Vedanta philosophy came with Ramanuja (12th-13th centuries). While accepting the basic propositions of Samkara's Advaita, Ramanuja at the same time imposed considerable restrictions (*vishishta*) on it.[2]

While for Samkara Brahman is a homogeneous impersonal Absolute and the world, an illusion, for Ramanuja Brahman is a person[3] including in itself the entire diversity of the material world, which, being a manifestation of Brahman, is real and not illusory. Brahman is the substance, while the world is an attribute.[4] The emergence of things (objects or phenomena) is viewed by Ramanuja as the manifestation of the world, and their destruction, as non-manifestation. Being destroyed, both matter devoid of consciousness and consciousness itself take the form of refined bodies, remaining the qualities of god.

The main difference between consciousness and matter is that consciousness is capable of enlightening itself (learning, enriching itself through knowledge) on the basis of its own existence, that is, it can be both subject and object. As for matter, it cannot enlighten itself, although it is the object of consciousness.

Inasmuch as Ramanuja does not oppose the concepts of "true reality" and "untrue reality" (appearance), he does not accept the division into knowledge (*vidya*) and non-knowledge (*avidya*), as Samkara did.

In the introduction to his commentaries on the Brahma-sutra (I. I. I), Ramanuja sets forth the following fundamental theses. Those who, like Samkara, assert that the finite and true reality is simply being without attributes (*nirisesavastu*) are wrong. Reality without attributes is incognisable, and its existence cannot be proved by any mode of cognition.

Here are Ramanuja's arguments in favour of this viewpoint.

(1) All objects whose existence has been proved by various modes of cognition (*pramanas*) have attributes. Consequently, the existence of an object without attributes cannot be proved.

(2) The concept of attribute is always present even in intuition — both in the case of self-consciousness and in the object of intuition.

(3) In the case of direct knowledge (*pratyaksa*), both reflective (*savikalpaka*) and non-reflective

[1] The idea of double reality is not an original feature of Samkara's teaching. As pointed out above, we also find it in Buddhist works (such as the Lankavatara-sutra or the Madhyamika Karika of Nagarjuna) and in Gaudapada's Mandukya Karika.

[2] Hence the name of Ramanuja's philosophy, *vishishtadvaita*.

[3] The god Vishnu, Shiva.

[4] Brahman is the cause and the effect of the material world.

(*nirvikalpaka*) knowledge has for its direct objects things characterised by definite attributes, with the sole difference that non-reflective direct knowledge yields an object devoid of some (through not all) attributes (see Sri-Bhasya, p. 29).

Ramanuja's main contribution to the Vedanta philosophy was his critique of Samkara's theory of untrue reality and untrue knowledge; his analysis of direct knowledge, which he divided into non-reflective and reflective; and his concretisation of the Brahman concept, as he believed that in Samkara that concept was too abstract and inaccessible to the broad masses.

The cause of human suffering, Ramanuja believed, does not lie in that this allegedly illusory world conceals Brahman from it and that, in cognising this "untrue world", we cannot obtain "true knowledge"; it rather lies in that Brahman is God, but we do not show enough love and loyalty to it (*bhakti*). According to the *bhakti* teaching, God is accessible to all, regardless of caste. Under the conditions prevailing in India at the time, this idea had a profound democratic meaning, as it sanctified the struggle against feudal and caste division.

Chapter 2. DEVELOPMENT OF PHILOSOPHICAL AND SOCIOLOGICAL THOUGHT IN INDIA AT THE TIME OF DISINTEGRATION AND CRISIS OF FEUDALISM (LATE 18TH-MID 19TH CENTURY)

Introduction

First we shall recall here in brief the principal propositions of historical materialism, i. e., of the methodology of cognition of the social process, by which we are guided in the analysis of philosophical and sociological ideas. "Just as man's knowledge," wrote Lenin, "reflects nature (i. e., developing matter), which exists independently of him, so man's *social knowledge* (i. e., his various views and doctrines — philosophical, religious, political and so forth) reflects the *economic system* of society. Political institutions are a superstructure of the economic foundation. We see, for example, that the various political forms of the modern European states serve to strengthen the domination of the bourgeoisie over the proletariat.

"Marx's philosophy is a consummate philosophical materialism which has provided mankind, and especially the working class, with powerful instruments of knowledge."[1] Historical materialism, or the materialist conception of history, proceeds from the assumption that the mode of production of material wealth is the foundation on which the whole of the social edifice rests. The mode of production of material wealth as the embodiment of the unity of

[1] V. I. Lenin, "The Three Sources and Three Component Parts of Marxism", *Collected Works*, Vol. 19, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1973, p. 25.

productive forces and men's production relations in the production of material wealth determines in the final analysis society's entire development. The singling out of *relations of production* out of all social relations and analysis of their role in social life permitted the view of society's entire development as a natural historical process. Epochs in society's development differ in the mode of production. Each type of society — primitive communal, slave-owning, feudal, capitalist — constitutes "a specific social organism, whose inception, functioning, and transition to a higher form, conversion into another social organism, are governed by specific laws".[1]

Historical materialism thus looks for the laws of history in men's social being and their material productive activity under the concrete historical system of production relations rather than in the consciousness of society (or individual) or in nature. "Consciousness [das Bewußtsein]," wrote Marx "can never be anything else than conscious being [das bewußte Sein], and the being of men is their actual life-process."[2]

The second aspect of the methodology of historical materialism is this: history should be regarded as the process and result of men's activity. In other words, in an integrated approach to history one must not restrict oneself to the view of history as an objective natural-historical process. It is also necessary to analyse the activities of *the subject of historical action* — the activities of men. History becomes meaningful if it is regarded as the history of man's own development. Marx wrote that the "social history of men is always the history of their individual development, whether they are conscious of it or not".[1]

[1] V. I. Lenin, "The Economic Content of Narodism and the Criticism of It in Mr. Struve's Book", *Collected Works*, Vol. 1, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1977, p. 410.

[2] K. Marx and F. Engels, "The German Ideology", in: Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1976, p. 36.

The view of history as the history of individual development of men introduces in the methodology of philosophical-sociological study of society the problem of man, individuality, and personality as one of the aspects of the approach to the historical process as a whole and not as one theme among others (society and personality, etc.). This approach permits working out the methodological principles of the reverse transition from the social to the individual under various historical conditions. The value of that is not just theoretical. At the present time — in the second half of the 20th century — the process of active historical creativity involves millions upon millions of people who only recently lived under the iron heel of colonialism and whose consciousness was shaped by extremely diverse social structures including archaic ones. To understand the course which events may take in these countries, it is important to take into account not only the internal and external conditions but also the nature of the actual subject of historical development now emerging on the historical scene in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. And this can only be learnt from analysis of the previous historical development of these countries.

The disintegration and decline of the feudal mode

[1] "Marx to Pavel Vasilyevich Annenkov in Paris", in: K. Marx, F. Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1975, p. 31.

of production, which began in India as early as the end of the 17th century, became particularly acute in the second half of the 18th century. The development of commodity economy and the growth of commodity-money relations were accompanied by a greater feudal exploitation of peasants and handicraftsmen and a growing dependence on merchants and money-lenders. The oppressed and impoverished strata of the population everywhere reacted to this by mass resistance. The foundations of the Mogul empire perished in the fire of the uprisings of peasants, handicraftsmen, and the oppressed nationalities (Maratha, Punjabi, and others), so that in the second half of the 18th century it actually ceased to exist.[1] Inasmuch as the Mogul empire was India's largest state, which at the beginning of the 18th century covered almost the whole of the country's territory with the exception of the extreme south, the weakening and disintegration of the Mogul empire determined the entire political situation in India.

The downfall of the Mogul empire did not yet signify disintegration of feudalism. The feudal mode of production in India had not at that time exhausted the possibilities of its development. Ultimately, that development would have resulted in independent emergence of capitalist relations in India. Stressing the possibility of independent progressive development of Indian society, Nehru wrote: "It seems quite possible ... that under normal conditions it would have undergone that change and begun to

[1] India consisted at that time of a number of states whose boundaries were unstable and kept changing as a result of military conflicts; nominally, the Mogul empire was the greatest of these states.

adapt itself, in its own way, to the new industrial conditions."[1]

But the country's historical destiny took a different turn. Economically backward and politically divided, India became the prey of British colonialists who established their dominance over the extensive territory of the Indian subcontinent over a period of about a hundred years (mid 18th-mid 19th century). Starting with direct plunder of India, the British invaders gradually turned it into an agrarian and raw-materials appendage of Great Britain — first as a market for their manufactured goods and later into a source of raw materials and foodstuffs; in that way India was drawn into the orbit of the world market.

Great Britain's colonial dominion entailed grave consequences for the Indian economy. The influx of relatively cheap British manufactured goods resulted in the undermining of many traditional branches of Indian handicraftsmanship and the ruin of hundreds of thousands of handicraftsmen. British colonialists gradually introduced the institution of private landownership in India. For the first time in the history of the country, land became the object of buying and selling. Landowners emerged as the social support of the colonialists. Taxes imposed on peasants grew immeasurably. Irrigation facilities were neglected and brought to ruin, though taking care of them had always been one of the major functions of state power in India.

Characterising India's economic position in the first half of the 19th century, Marx wrote in the article "The British Rule in India": "There

[1] J. Nehru, *op. cit.*, p. 301.

cannot ... remain any doubt but that the misery inflicted by the British on Hindostan is of an essentially different and infinitely more intensive kind than all Hindostan had to suffer before.... All the civil wars, invasions, revolutions, conquests, famines, strangely complex, rapid, and destructive as the successive action in Hindostan may appear, did not go deeper than its surface. England has broken down the entire framework of Indian society, without any symptoms of reconstitution yet appearing."[1]

The establishment of Britain's colonial rule in India did not bring about liquidation of the feudal production relations that dominated Indian society, and was combined with preservation of the country's socio-economic backwardness. The system of European education introduced by the British authorities involved only the upper crust of Indian society. Marx wrote: "From the Indian natives, reluctantly and sparingly educated at Calcutta, under English superintendence, a fresh class is springing up, endowed with the requirements for government and imbued with European science." Referring to the consequences of British colonial rule in India, Marx stressed that "the work of regeneration hardly transpires through a heap of ruins."[2]

Numerous rebellions of Indian peasants and handicraftsmen, the city poor, etc., against feudal exploitation and colonial oppression took place in the first half of the 19th century. The most

[1] K. Marx, "The British Rule in India", in: K. Marx, F. Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 12, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1979, p. 126.

[2] K. Marx, "The Future Results of British Rule in India", in: K. Marx, F. Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 12, p. 218.

significant uprisings occurred in Bengal in 1831 and 1846, and also in Punjab, in the south, and in other areas of the country. The masses of peasants and handicraftsmen demanded a return to the old times, that is to say, to the patriarchal relations of the past, but objectively their struggle against feudal lords and colonialists shook the foundations of the feudal structure and cleared the path for the new, capitalist relations.

It is particularly important to note here the changes in the position of peasants — the principal productive force of the country. Having conquered the country and suppressed the uprisings, the British faced the problem of creating stable relations with the local population and ensuring the conditions for "normal" exploitation of Indian peasants. These goals were met by the introduction by the colonialists of new land taxation — the zamindari (permanent settlements) system in Bengal and the *ryotwari* system in the south of India, which determined the specific features of the subsequent development of agriculture and the agrarian question in India for many decades.

The colonial powers, which had only recently been merchants or plunderers, now became feudal lords. The process of impoverishment and ruination of considerable strata of the peasantry became more intense, and the rural commune ceased to have its former all-important significance. The national bourgeoisie in India did not as yet exist at the time as a separate class, and there was no proletariat.

Certain contradictory processes were taking place among Indian intellectuals with a European education, many of whom were in the employ of the colonial administration: their upper stratum formed a close alliance with the colonialists and the landowner

class, while the other part, sympathetic to the working people, though far removed from revolutionary struggle, endeavoured to defend the people's interests. These latter intellectuals, believing that the only path that India would follow would be that of the capitalist West, criticised feudalism, its political and legal institutions and ideology, and some of them hoped that the British powers would be the allies of India's progressive forces in their struggle against the country's feudal stagnation.

The principal carriers of feudal ideology were Hindu and Moslem clergy. Defending religious dogmas, they insisted that man's position in this earthly life was determined either by his merits in "the past births"[1] or by the will of Allah, and that man himself was powerless to change anything in his destiny and should therefore succumb to his lot without grumbling. Hindu religion zealously defended the division of society into castes. The whole of man's spiritual life was subordinated to blindly following the rigid dogmas of Hinduism or Islam, and any manifestation of free thought deviating from the positions canonised by religion was cruelly suppressed and persecuted.

There were a great many communities of monk-beggars at that time in India, and also various sects which preached on the vanity of all earthly pursuits, a rejection of secular life, and escape into self-contemplation, absorption in one's inner world through Yogic exercises.

Humayun Kabir, a major public figure in modern India, thus describes the spiritual state of the country at that time: "The manifold activities of the human

[1] What is meant here is the Hinduist doctrine of transmigration of souls.

mind which characterised the life of ancient India were reduced to a dull ascetic gray by the time of the middle ages. Nor is this surprising. A mentality of ascetism is a necessary corollary to foreign conquest and domination. Even a society which is so essentially anti-ascetic as the Muslim developed an ascetic attitude after the British conquest of India. Hopes of reward and glory in an after-life were evoked to crowd out the consciousness of bitter defeats in the present."[1]

Thus at the end of the 18th and in the first half of the 19th century, British colonial conquest brought about extremely unfavourable conditions for the development of India's socio-political and philosophical thought.

In the area of philosophy, highly popular among the upper strata of Indian society was the objective-idealist doctrine of the Vedanta, which was wholly in the service of religious orthodoxy. The philosophers of other traditional Indian schools (Charvaka Lokayatika, Nyaya, Vaisesika, Mimamsa, Samkhya, Yoga, and others) also continued to be active. In the south of the country, extremely popular among the Andhra people were the works of the outstanding poet and thinker Vamana, permeated with love of freedom, glorifying reason and calling in question traditional beliefs.

Ram Mohan Roy

As class struggle in Indian society grew more acute in the late 18th and early 19th century, an ideological trend of enlighteners and religious reformers took shape of which the most outstanding figure was the

[1] H. Kabir, *The Indian Heritage*, Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1955, p. 102.

social reformer and thinker Ram Mohan Roy (1772-1833). Roy and his colleagues were the precursors of the Indian movement of bourgeois enlighteners and religious reformers of the second half of the 19th century.

Roy was the son of a zamindar (of the Brahman caste) from the small village of Radhanagar in Bengal. The future thinker's youth was spent in hard study and spiritual quest. He studied history, religion, philosophy, and foreign languages.[1] Apart from Islam, Buddhism, and Hindu philosophy, he knew the work of European philosophers and sociologists, in particular the work of Bacon and Bentham; he studied Christianity, mastering towards that purpose Hebrew and Greek, and was at the same time profoundly interested in the history of the French revolution and the contemporary bourgeois-democratic movements in various countries. In characterising Roy's encyclopedic erudition, Romain Rolland wrote that he embraced a range of knowledge from Hymalayan mythology to the scientific disciplines of modern Europe.

Roy was a great figure in Indian culture, the pride of the Indian people and of the entire progressive mankind. "This gigantic personality," wrote Romain Rolland, "... forced his plough deep into the soil of India... A great writer in Sanskrit, Bengali, Arabic, Persian, and English, the father of modern Bengali prose, author of famous hymns, poems, discourses, philosophical and political treatises, controversial writings on all kinds of questions, he generously sowed the seeds of his thoughts and his flame. And he also gathered a crop from the land of Bengal — the crop of deeds and the crop

[1] By the time he was of mature age, Roy knew Sanskrit, Persian, Arabic, English, Hebrew, and Greek.

of persons. The Tagores came out of him — when you have said that, you have said everything."[1]

The emergence and growth of bourgeois tendencies in the socio-economic relations of contemporary Bengal ultimately determined the nature and orientation of the shaping of Roy's worldview. He was the herald of the national movement in India, a movement which inevitably emerges where the objective preconditions for a victory of capitalism over feudalism mature. Lenin wrote: "Throughout the world, the period of the final victory of capitalism over feudalism has been linked up with national movements. For the complete victory of commodity production, the bourgeoisie must capture the home market, and there must be politically united territories whose population speaks a single language, with all obstacles to the development of that language and to its consolidation in literature eliminated."[2]

The philosophical views of Ram Mohan Roy were those of an objective idealist, a follower of the Vedanta philosophical system. His Vedantism was in its main features a continuation of the Ramanuja line; from the religious viewpoint, it was marked by orientation at theism, and from the philosophical one, by recognition of the reality of "this" world. Roy wrote that we turn to the one being seeing it as an animating and regulating principle of all that is in the universe and the original source of all the individual souls which animate in an approximately similar way their individual bodies and govern them.

[1] R. Rolland, *La vie de Ramakrishna*, Librarie Stock, Delamain et Boutelleau, Paris, 1930, pp. 107, 115.

[2] V. I. Lenin, "The Right of Nations to Self-Determination", *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 396.

As distinct from Samkara, who viewed the world as Maya, i. e., illusory, Roy insisted on its reality. He wrote that the Vedanta, comparing the world with the notion of a snake which may arise when one sees a really existing rope, says that this world, just as this seeming snake, has no independent existence but receives its existence from the supreme being.

Firmly adhering to objective-idealist positions, Roy at the same time made some essential concessions to materialism. In his writings we find certain passages to the effect that matter is eternal, uncreated, and conditioned by itself as its own cause. God (the "supreme spirit") is only an overseer watching over the things and processes of the material world. He wrote that all objects pertain either to matter or to the spirit... Each material object takes its source in universal matter under the supervision of the supreme spirit and then goes back to its source... Undoubtedly the material cause of the world is the minutest particles which obviously cannot be destroyed: they are called *anu* or atoms. It cannot be assumed that in immaterial divinity can be the material cause of these particles, just as it cannot be believed that they arose out of nothing. Consequently, these particles must exist eternally, and they take different shapes in different places and at different times at God's will.

These ideas, however, were not systematically elaborated by Roy, as he was more attracted to sociological problems; however, it would be hard to overestimate their positive significance. It is on this "realistic plane" that all the most valuable ideas in the content of the Vedanta of the 19th and early 20th century developed (Dayananda

Saraswati, Swami Vivekananda, Sri Aurobindo Ghose, and others).

Ram Mohan Roy was in favour of secular education built on the European model and based on the modern natural sciences. He believed that Sanskrit wisdom kept the country in the dark, comparing the contemporary state of Indian science with that which existed in England in the pre-Baconian times.

The philosopher did a great deal to extract the country, in the words of Nehru, from the vise of ancient scholasticism. In 1817, an Indian college was founded in Calcutta where European languages and sciences were taught along with Indian languages. That was the first educational establishment of the European type for Indians. Ram Mohan Roy was also one of the founders of the Indian national press; he published several papers which spread the views of enlighteners.

The activities of Ram Mohan Roy, his struggle against India's feudal backwardness, against scholasticism and the gap between theoretical thought and life, his attempts to introduce the country to the greatest attainments of Western culture, including philosophy — all of this was of great positive significance. Roy was familiar with the ideas of the progressive European thinkers — Francis Bacon, the French Enlighteners of the 18th century, the socialist Utopians, etc., and he personally met Robert Owen and other West European thinkers.

Roy was sympathetic to the revolutionary movements in France, Spain, Italy, and Germany; he believed that the ideas underlying those movements would ultimately triumph. He was profoundly saddened by the defeat of the people's movement for

a constitution in Naples, but he believed it to be merely a temporary setback. "The enemies of freedom, the adherents of autocracy cannot win, because they never win the final battle,"[1] he wrote.

Although Roy's reformist ideas in the field of religion and ethics were worked out under the impact of the monotheistic doctrines of Christianity and Islam, he always believed himself to be an orthodox follower of Hinduism. At the same time he acted as a reformer of the Hindu religion and denounced the vices of the feudal structure. "I regret to say," he wrote, "that the present system of religion adhered to by the Hindus is not well calculated to promote their political interest. The distinction of castes introducing innumerable divisions and subdivisions among them has entirely deprived them of patriotic feeling, and the multitude of religious rites and ceremonies and the laws of purification have totally disqualified them from undertaking any difficult enterprise..."[2]

Criticising idol worship, the philosopher did not insist on the creation of a new religion but merely endeavoured to "purify" the Vedic religion from the crude and most ignorant superstitions. He rejected idolatry in whatever form and under whatever sophistry it might camouflage itself — whether it be the worship of an artificial, natural, or imagined object. Our tribute to the deity, he believes, consists entirely in the realisation of *daya* or benevolent attitude to all the others rather

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[1] Kabiraj Narahari, *The National Liberation Movement in Bengal*, Foreign Literature Publishing House, Moscow, 1956, p. 60 (In Russian, tr. from Bengali).

[2] *Selected Works of Raja Rammohun Roy*, Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, New Delhi, 1977, p. 296.

than in an artificial belief or certain movements of the feet, the hands, the head, the tongue, and other bodily movements in the pulpit or in front of a temple. Ram Mohan Roy opposed idol worship in his private conversations and public speeches, in articles, pamphlets, and a number of special works. "...I opposed the advocates of idolatry...", he wrote. "I published various works and pamphlets against their (the advocates of idolatry) errors, in the native and foreign languages... I endeavoured to show that the idolatry of the Brahmans was contrary to the practice of their ancestors, and the principles of their ancestors, and the principles of their ancient books."[1]

Ram Mohan Roy gave a profound criticism of the caste system, in accordance with which society was divided into isolated groups differing in the origin and legal status of their members, which brought about extreme isolation of these groups in Indian society.

He differed from traditional Hinduism, calling in question the belief in transmigrations of the soul, that is to say, rejecting the doctrines of *karma* and *samsara*. The significance of this step is particularly great if one takes into account that in the whole history of Indian thought only the Charvaka Lokayatika school dared to oppose these basic dogmas of Hinduism.

At the same time Ram Mohan Roy opposed European missionaries spreading the ideas of Christianity. He wrote that the missionaries defended and preached doctrines that were less in agreement with reason than the doctrines of Muslims, and in

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[1] Quoted in: R. W.Frazer, *A Literary History of India*, T. Fisher Unwin, London, 1898, p. 391.

many respects just as absurd as the generally accepted beliefs of Hindus.

Ram Mohan Roy was deeply concerned about the Indian people's oppressed and humiliated state. He kept thinking incessantly on the causes of the long drawn-out social tragedy. He came to the conclusion that the reason lay not only in idolatry or the division of society into castes but also in excessive mildness with regard to the foreign invaders which was rooted in the traditional refusal to take even animal life.

Endeavouring to guide the movement of enlightenment through organised channels, Ram Mohan Roy founded in 1828 the Brahmo Samaj, a society for religious reform, which was open to all persons regardless of their colour, convictions, caste, nationality, and religion. Its most active members included Dwarkanath Tagore (Rabindranath Tagore's grandfather) and quite a few of others. One of the documents of the society said that its members gathered to worship and give praise to the Eternal, Unknowable, and Immutable Being that is the creator and protector of the Universe but has no name, definition or designation used for denotation or applied to any particular Being or Beings or by any man or society of men.

The meaning of the activities of the Brahmo Samaj society was uniting the progressive forces of the nation, raising the country's cultural standard and the struggle for elimination of the caste, religious, and other divisions, for implementing a number of other reforms. The members of Brahmo Samaj demanded the abolition of the *suttee* rite (the concremation of widows) and permission for members of different castes to enter upon marital relations; they advocated the overcoming of religious strife between Hindus and Muslims and the cessation of religious discord between the followers of Hinduism and other religions. Ram Mohan Roy wrote that god is one, and all creatures are subject to him regardless of castes, rank and riches.

The members of the society strove to reform general education on a scientific basis. To this purpose, they compiled textbooks of geography, astronomy, geometry, grammar, etc. Ram Mohan Roy and his comrades-in-arms fought for the establishment of freedom of ideas and the press.

Ram Mohan Roy and the other members of Brahmo Samaj did their best to make India part of the civilisation of the capitalist countries of Europe by dragging it out of the age-long stagnation and lifting it to the level of the progressive countries of the world.

In opposition to Brahmo Samaj, the defenders of orthodox Hinduism founded an organisation of their own — Dharma Sabha, which worked for the preservation of obsolete religious rites and traditions in India.

Debendranath Tagore

In 1842, Debendranath Tagore (1817-1905), the son of Dwarkanath Tagore, a founder of Brahmo Samaj, and the father of Rabindranath Tagore, the great Indian writer, joined Brahmo Samaj. Debendranath Tagore and his closest comrade-in-arms Akshaya Kumar Datta started a new phase in the ideological movement of the Indian enlighteners. They criticised Ram Mohan Roy's "Westernism", particularly his inclination towards Christian morality. Placing the religion of Hinduism above all other religions, Debendranath Tagore kept insisting on the need to study and keep up the na-

tional traditions of the Indian people. Hinduism, purified of scholastic admixtures and extraneous influences, was to become the standard of India's rebirth.

The British colonialists in every way obstructed the activities of Brahmo Samaj, intending to create a stratum of intellectuals that might be the mediator between the British and the millions of Indians under their rule; a stratum that would be Indian in blood and skin colour but English in tastes, views, morality, and mental attitude.

But, despite the colonialists' efforts to bring about split between the educated strata of Indian society and the people and its national culture, even among the Anglicised Indian intellectuals there was a small but rather popular section of progressive minded young men who wished to respond in some way or other to the needs of their country and the people's sufferings and struggle. The most progressive representatives of this section formed a group that came to be known as Young Bengal. This group was influenced by the ideas of the French Enlightenment and the American War of Independence.

Prominent among the members of this group were Bandopadhyaya, Ramgopal Ghose, and Bhashak.

Henry Derozio

The ideological leader of Young Bengal was a college teacher named Henry Derozio (1809-1839)—the son of a Portuguese merchant and an Englishwoman, who was born and spent all his life in India. He was a great patriot of his native land, which he called an eagle with its wings tied. He was debarred from college teaching for having publicly expressed his materialist views. He died at thirty from cholera. Derozio left behind a book of wonderful poems

in English, of which the most important was "The Fakir of Janghira". Some members of the Young Bengal group, following Derozio, expressed sympathy with materialism. Thus, his disciple Bandopadhyaya asserted that there was no afterlife and that man is like clockwork. One of the members of the Young Bengal group related that during the sacred thread ceremony some of them refused to accept it. When they were taken to the temple by force, they recited excerpts from the *Iliad* instead of the evening prayer. The group also objected to Christian orthodoxy. The missionary Daff wrote in exasperation about Young Bengal that they regarded religion as no more than a subtler ruse to keep up the prejudices in which society was enmeshed, and the priests, as cunning enemies or ignorant followers of orthodoxy.

The spreading of reformist ideas of Brahmo Samaj and of the progressive philosophical and anticlerical views of Young Bengal played an important role in the development of India's social life, literature, science, and culture.

Highly popular in Bengal at that time was the monthly periodical *Tattva-bodhini-patrika* (1839), which published a number of works with materialist leanings. *Tattva-bodhini-patrika* and the newspaper *Hindoo Patriot*, founded somewhat later, wrote with indignation of the sorry plight of the coolies at indigo plantations and the excessive burden of taxation ruining the peasants, etc.

* * *

In the late 1850s and early 1860s a new wave of peasant unrest and of the liberation movement against British domination swept the country. The

first attempt of a unified action by the Indian people against colonial oppression was the national uprising of 1857-1859, sometimes called the Sepoy Mutiny, of which the main motive force were peasants, handicraftsmen, and soldiers. The uprising was joined and even headed by some feudals disgruntled at the loss of their former possessions and lucrative sources of income.

The working classes were the most consistent fighters for the national cause. Patriotic feelings united heterogeneous social and religious groups within the single camp of the uprising which raged in the north of India for about two years. That was one of the first examples of joint action by Hindus and Moslems in a major social movement. The committee which headed the uprising called on Moslems to unite like brothers in the fight against foreign invaders trampling and desecrating the sacred land of the Indians' forebears. Despite the courage and heroism of the insurgents, the uprising was cruelly crushed by the British.

The 1857-1859 revolt in India was not an isolated phenomenon: it coincided in time and nature with the Taiping movement in China and the Babist rebellion in Iran. As Marx pointed out, "the revolt in the Anglo-Indian army has coincided with a general disaffection exhibited against English supremacy on the part of the great Asiatic nations, the revolt of the Bengal army being, beyond doubt, intimately connected with the Persian and Chinese wars".[1] The 1857-1859 uprising was the last major revolt by the Indian people in the period preceding

[1] K. Marx, "The Revolt in the Indian Army", in: K. Marx and F. Engels, *Articles on Britain*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1978, p. 280.

the formation of the capitalist structure in the Indian economy. But the revolutionary anticolonial and antifeudal struggle of the Indian peasants and the city poor did not cease after the suppression of this uprising either.

The struggle of peasants against the feudals and English oppressors invoked increasing sympathy on the part of the democratically minded Indian intellectuals. At the peak of one of the major peasant movements, the indigo uprising of 1859-1860, the *Hindoo Patriot* wrote that Bengali peasants, who had no power, no means, no political knowledge or even leadership, carried out a revolution which in its scale and significance was just as great as any of the other revolutions in the social history of other countries. Villages were burnt, men driven into slavery, women raped, corn stocks destroyed, all types of coercion were resorted to, but, despite all this, the ryots did not give up their aspirations for freedom to which they had a right from birth and which, as they were told, was ensured by law.

The nascent capitalist relations in the country and the openly discriminatory policies of the British colonialists with regard to Indians facilitated the development of the national self-awareness and the growing indignation against the British oppressors.

Anti-British actions by intellectuals, however, were still very timid, being limited to appeals, petitions, and complaints, mostly aimed at preserving the national culture. Speaking in the 1840s at the opening of the school for the study and propaganda of Brahmo Samaj ideas, founded at the initiative of Debendranath Tagore for combating Christianity cultivated by the missionaries, Akshaya Kumar Datta said:

"We no longer rely on ourselves in anything. We are subject to foreign power, receive education in a foreign language, and suffer from foreign oppression, while the Chiristian religion assumes an influence that makes one wonder if it is the national religion of this country. That is why we must at present teach where we can in our own language and instruct in full agreement with the spirit of our religion, or else in the near future we shall not differ from the English in any way: their language will be our national language, and their religion, the national religion of this country. My heart breaks when I think that the word 'Hindus' may be forgotten and we shall be called by a foreign name."[1]

Later, to the requirement of preserving the national culture was added the demand for breaking down the obstacles in the way of the development of the economy. The article from the *Hindoo Patriot* quoted above pointed out that the colonial system resulted in the suppression of the most important branches of the national industry, which was directed along lines unnatural to it or subordinated to non-productive goals.

That was in general outline the ideology of the precursors of the bourgeois national liberation movement in India in the 1840s and 1850s. It was most widely spread in Bengal, which was at the time the most progressive part of the country. Elements of this new ideology emerged to some extent or other in other regions too. Literature and the press in the national languages of various Indian peoples began to develop, the thirst for new education grew, the conservatism of theology and old

[1] Quoted in: Kabiraj Narahari, *op. cit.*, p. 66.

scholastic science became increasingly obvious, and the need for absorption of modern knowledge and modern culture became more and more insistently felt.

New reformers and heralds of new ideas appeared among many peoples of India. In Andhra, Lakshminarasu and Viresalingama endeavoured to improve the system of education and to revive the country's cultural life. In Maharashtra, the Parthana-Samaj was founded in 1867 which debated problems of social and religious reform at its sittings.

These societies and religious reformist trends were most influential in the first half of the 19th century in those areas of India where elements of capitalist relations were born — in Bengal, Maharashtra, Andhra. Objectively, these movements and trends expressed the crisis of feudalism and the needs of the country's capitalist development.[1] But, insofar as bourgeois relations in India before the 1870s were rudimentary, and the nascent bourgeoisie was politically dependent on the colonial powers, the work of enlightenment carried out by its ideologues and their demands for social transformations were inconsistent and half-hearted.

The ideology of the bourgeois elements of Indian society mostly developed in religious and theological form. The country's dependent position, among other factors, determined the religious nature of Indian enlightenment. Since colonial domination led to a real danger of India losing its national identity, some intellectuals viewed religion,

[1] The assertion by some bourgeois scholars that the Indian social movement of the times was a direct result of the activities of Christian missionaries and of Western influence is quite erroneous.

which for quite a few centuries had been dominant in the people's spiritual life, as the only form of expression of natural self-awareness. They believed the religious ideology of Hinduism, that was practised with little variation throughout the country, to be a kind of unifying principle.

Indian enlighteners had weak ties with the people's movements and did not see the masses as the only force capable of freeing the country from feudalism and colonialism. At the same time the actions of the peasantry and the urban poor classes, despite their being divided, unorganised, and ideologically limited, shook the foundations of the feudal mode of production, weakened the power of the colonialists in the country and objectively paved the way to the development of bourgeois relations in India.[1]

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[1] The progressive circles of contemporary Russian society felt profound sympathy for the national-liberation struggle of the Indian people. Russian revolutionary democrats strongly condemned the regime established by the British in India, and denounced the myth of the colonialists' civilising activities. Thus, N. A. Dobrolyubov wrote: "England's ultimate goal was profit for the state and private individuals rather than the cause of civilisation. Management from afar, continuity of despotism, concern with profit rather than the people's welfare (which is proved in particular by opium), preference given to the higher castes over the productive classes of the people, inability to take into account the people's needs — these are the ... phenomena which must have oppressed the Indian population and given rise to its unending discontent. To this were added, of course, the abuses of officials; but in themselves they could not have had great significance. If it were only the officials, the people would be dissatisfied with the officials only: the people's hatred would stop there. And now they have risen because they finally discerned the evil in the very organisation of English rule" (N. A. Dobrolyubov, "A View of the History and Contemporary State of East India", *Collected Works* in nine volumes, Vol. 1, GIKhL Publishers, Moscow-Leningrad, 1962, p. 44 [in Russian]).

Part Two

Section I

THE DEVELOPMENT OF PHILOSOPHICAL AND SOCIOLOGICAL THOUGHT IN INDIA AT THE TIME OF FORMATION OF THE CAPITALIST STRUCTURE AND INTENSIFICATION OF COLONIAL OPPRESSION (THE 1860s-1890s)

Introduction

The middle of the 19th century was a pivotal point in the history of India. By crushing the national uprising of the Indian people in 1857-1859, the British colonialists completed the conquest of the country, which had lasted more than a hundred years. As a result of the devastating impact of English industry on India, the disintegration of Indian handicrafts, of peasant family industries, and of the village commune, which had for centuries been the foundation of the Indian social structure, had by that time been largely completed. Colonial India became an appendage of Great Britain, a source of agricultural products and raw materials and, with the start of the epoch of imperialism, a sphere of export of British capital.

The development of capitalism in India, which began already within the feudal system, assumed extremely grave forms due to the predatory methods of exploitation practised by English industrialists. Marx wrote in this connection that "England has broken down the entire framework of Indian society, without any symptoms of reconstitution yet appearing".[1] In other words, the old world was ruined, and the new one was not built. "This loss of his old

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[1] K. Marx, "The British Rule in India", in: K. Marx, F. Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 12, p. 126.

world," wrote Marx in 1853, "with no gain of a new one, imparts a particular kind of melancholy to the present misery of the Hindoo, and separates Hindostan, ruled by Britain, from all its ancient traditions, and from the whole of its past history."[1]

Famines in India became more frequent and involved greater areas. In the first half of the 19th century there were seven years of famine and 1.5 million died as a result of it, while in the third quarter of the 19th century five million died in six years of famine. In the last quarter of the 19th century, there were 18 years of famine, while the number of victims of starvation reached 26 million.

English industrialists made investments only in those enterprises which helped extend the markets for their products and increase the imports of agricultural produce from India into Great Britain. With this aim in view, extensive construction of communications was undertaken, in the first place, of railways. By 1891, some 27,000 kilometres of railways had been constructed.

The Indian economy of the times did not at all need this kind of dense and ramified railway network, but now the colonialists' industrial products could reach even the most remote corners of the country, while the exploitation, the pumping out of the resources of the native population yielded fabulous profits.

In 1881 Marx wrote: "What the English take from them [the Indians.— *Tr.*] annually in the form of rent, dividends for railways useless to the Hindus; pensions for military and civil servicemen, for Afghanistan and other wars, etc., etc.— what they take from them *without any equivalent* and *quite*

[1] K. Marx, "The British Rule...", op. cit., pp. 126-27.

apart from what they appropriate to themselves annually *within* India,— speaking only of the *value of the commodities* the Indians have *gratuitously* and annually to *send over* to England — it amounts to *more than the total sum of income of the 60 millions of agricultural and industrial labourers of India!* This is a bleeding process with a vengeance!"[1]

Lenin thus characterised the significance of railway construction under colonial regimes: "The building of railways seems to be a simple, natural, democratic, cultural and civilising enterprise.... But as a matter of fact the capitalist threads, which in thousands of different intercrossings bind these enterprises with private property in the means of production in general, have converted this railway construction into an instrument for oppressing *a thousand million* people (in the colonies and semi-colonies)..."[2]

Rapid growth of railway construction, despite the will and consciousness of colonialists, facilitated the emergence of a number of new branches of industry — coal mining, cotton, exploitation of other mineral resources, etc. That was the objective tendency of economic development of the colonies established by Marx in his articles on India. He wrote: "The English millocracy intend to endow India with railways with the exclusive view of extracting at diminished expenses the cotton and other raw materials for their manufactures. But when you have once introduced machinery into the locomo-

[1] "Marx to Nikolai Frantsevich Danielson in St. Petersburg", in: K. Marx, F. Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, p. 317.

[2] V. I. Lenin, "Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism", *Collected Works*, Vol. 22, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1975, p. 190.

tion of a country, which possesses iron and coals, you are unable to withhold it from its fabrication. You cannot maintain a net of railways over an immense country without introducing all those industrial processes necessary to meet the immediate and current wants of railway locomotion, and out of which there must grow the application of machinery to those branches of industry not immediately connected with railways. The railway-system will therefore become, in India, truly the forerunner of modern industry."[1]

This scientific forecast of Marx was fully borne out by subsequent development. Indian industry kept growing slowly but steadily. Just as inevitably, new classes of Indian society were formed — the industrial bourgeoisie and the proletariat. In 1853, the first Indian textile factory came into operation in Bombay, which employed 500 workers. By 1880, there were already 156 factories employing more than 44,000, and by 1900, almost 200 factories with some 161,000 workers.

At the same time the numbers of native intellectuals (lawyers, doctors, teachers, etc.) grew. Thus new political forces emerged on the historical scene which by their nature were hostile to the British colonialists and feudal reactionaries.

It is a well-known fact that the first school where the bourgeoisie learns nationalism is the market. In 1882, the Indian bourgeoisie was given the first lessons in that school by the British. At the insistence of the owners of Lancashire cotton factories, imports of British commodities were made dutyfree. When these measures for suppressing

[1] K. Marx, "The Future Results of British Rule in India", in: K. Marx, F. Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 12, p. 220.

competition proved to be inadequate, a special tax (excise-duty) was imposed on the products of Indian cotton factories.

Colonialists did all in their power to resist the formation of capitalist relations in India. Not only did they retard the development of national industry but they also ruined agriculture. In the process, the country's principal productive force, the peasants, became pauperised. Opposing the development of capitalism in India, the British colonialists relied mostly on the feudal forces. They recognised the zamindar landlord's right of private land ownership, and thereby what Marx described as artificial expropriation of the Indian peasant's right to land in favour of the landlord. The zamindar was given unlimited bondage rights vis-á-vis the peasant. He could increase the rent at his own will, arrest the peasant, seize his property, etc. Oppression and absence of rights, exploitation by usurers, poverty, disease and hunger made the peasant's life unbearable. Peasant revolts (in Punjab, Maharashtra, the Madras and Bengal presidencies, the Hindu principalities) continued nearly throughout the second half of the 19th century.

The situation of Indian workers was not much better: they had to work 14-15 hours a day under very hard conditions, they received starvation wages, and lived in confined and unhygienic dwellings. The new class was born in open and fierce class struggle. The number of strikes grew from year to year. The first one broke out in 1877 at Nagpur textile factories. Between 1882 and 1890, 25 strikes were recorded. Links between workers of different enterprises were established, and the idea of founding a workers' organisation emerged. In 1890, a trade union (of textile workers) was

founded for the first time in the history of the workers' movement in India. It had its own organ, the *Dinabandoo* (The Friend of the Poor). At that time, however, the Indian proletariat was not as yet an independent political force in view of its poor organisation and small numbers.

That was, in brief outline, the socio-political and economic basis which determined the alignment of the class forces on the ideological front in India in the second half of the 19th century.

The orthodox religious ideologies of Hinduism and Islam dominant at that time reflected the interests of the reactionary class of feudal landlords and the Indian merchants and industrialists — defenders of the interests of British capital. Their political and theoretical credo was justification of the feudal and colonial order.

On the other hand, the ideologues of the new class of the national bourgeoisie expressed the Indian people's national self-awareness that took shape at the time, although most of them were ostensibly religious reformers. That camp was not uniform, falling into two trends, the liberal bourgeois (mostly consisting of big businessmen and bourgeois intellectuals) and the radical democratic (which was petty-bourgeois in its social background and especially in the views of its representatives). The ideology of liberal nationalism began to take shape as early as the middle of the 19th century, while the ideology of petty-bourgeois nationalism and democracy was formed only in the 1880s and attained full development in the early years of the 20th century.

The ideology of the Indian national liberation movement from its very inception contained features characteristic of the ideology of the bourgeoisie in

the colonial and semi-colonial countries: duality, indecision, inconsistency. On the one hand, the economic and political contradictions between the Indian and English bourgeoisie impelled the former to participate in the national liberation struggle against the colonialists. On the other hand, the class community of the bourgeoisie of Great Britain and India promoted a kind of alliance between the bourgeoisie of the colonial power and the colony, an alliance which became particularly strong at the time of acute class struggle in the country.

As industry developed and capitalist markets extended, the boundaries dividing India's separate peoples disappeared. At the same time the Indian bourgeoisie more and more aspired towards unity, towards consolidation of its forces and ultimately towards establishing its political domination throughout the country. On the organisational level, the unification of the bourgeoisie manifested itself in the founding in 1885 of the first political party, the Indian National Congress.

The socio-political and philosophical ideas that grew on this historical basis reflected the growing contradictions and struggle of the classes of Indian society.

A characteristic of the situation at the ideological front in India would be incomplete if we omitted the following important circumstance. The fact is that British colonialists in their endeavour to consolidate and perpetuate their political and economic dominance started a wide campaign for enslaving the Indian people spiritually. The principal ideological weapon was Christianity spread by the missionaries. The so-called missionary societies were fostered throughout the country. According to Max Müller's information, in 1885 there were 38 mission-

ary societies in India, Burma, and Ceylon, with 887 members. They were helped by 751 native preachers and 2,856 secular assistants.

The main forms of work of the missionaries were sermons delivered to the "pagans", parish work, founding schools, literary work, charity work at hospitals, orphanages, among women, etc. Societies had local divisions, or stations, as they were called. Each missionary station (there were 661 of them in 1881) was an annually expanding centre engaged in the missionary activities described here. The stations relied in these activities on Christian communities founded amongst the "pagans" (Hindus). In 1881, there were 4,180 such communities.[1] A particularly great role in spreading Christianity was played by schools. More than 200,000 Indian children were taught at missionary schools in the 1880s.

Enormous sums were spent on spreading Christianity which implanted ideas useful to the colonialists. The Holy Scriptures were translated, fully or in part, into nearly 30 Indian languages. Some 30 missionary printing-houses worked to publish literature in the vernaculars. Thus, between 1862 and 1872, 3,410 new works were published, as well as 2,375,000 copies of Christian textbooks and 8,750,000 Christian tracts. Great attention was paid to work among women. The missionaries believed that the women of India had a great influence on their husbands, family life and children's education and were largely responsible for preserving the caste morality and "pagan" rites.

However, the colonialists' ideological offensive

[1] According to some sources, the number of Christians at the end of 1887 was 2,128,228.

ran into stubborn resistance from almost all the strata of Indian society. The only exceptions were reactionaries and antipatriots, mostly zamindar landlords, comprador merchants and native colonial officials. Ideologically, these supporters of foreign dominance did not go beyond presenting the colonialists' spiritual subversion as the greatest "spiritual revolution" expected to bring about the "awakening" of the Indian people.

The colonial press frequently referred to an "upheaval in the Hindus' spiritual world". Thus, the governor of Bombay declared that Christian instruction given to Hindus and Mohammedans produced moral, social, and political upheavals which in their scale and speed of spreading considerably surpassed similar upheavals in Europe. A member of the Madras council, of pagan convictions, "saw himself" that in many areas of India the lower sections of the populace had been so greatly enlightened by the missionaries that they had pushed into the foreground occupying nearly the front ranks of Indian society. The number of this kind of testimonials could be extended, but even these few are enough to get an idea of the advertising work on the "spiritual stick" policy by which the colonialists intended to effect spiritual enslavement of the Indian population.

Making the Indians spiritual slaves of the colonialists was the most dangerous, in its pernicious consequences, historical action ever undertaken by the foreign invaders. It should be stressed at the same time, however, that the attainment of that goal was a very difficult and even practically impossible task. Only extreme ignorance of history and of the objective laws of the development of society, as well as political adventurism, could

compel the colonialists to undertake that dirty and hopeless task.

Acute ideological struggle "for liberation from Christianity" spread throughout the whole of India. True, the division of society into classes ruled out the unity of the ultimate goal, and of the forms and methods of this struggle. Patriotic forces united on the national scale under very general slogans, as a rule. Particularly successful was the appeal to rise in defence of the native religion.

The ideological struggle went on three fronts, essentially.

The first trend, of which Swami Dayananda Sarasvati of Gujarat was the most brilliant representative, set itself the task of reforming and reviving the rigid religion of Hinduism and of opposing it to Christianity. Dayananda call was, "Back to the Vedas". In practical terms, this slogan, which was mostly current among the Hindu bourgeoisie of Punjab and the United Provinces, expressed the desire for adapting traditional Indian culture and religion to the needs of the country's bourgeois development.

Dayananda combined propaganda and the spreading of his ideas with extensive organisational work. In 1875, he founded in Bombay the Arya Samaj, a reformist enlightening society, and in 1876, a division of this society at Lahore. Later, the society opened its divisions in many provinces of India.

Smaller but independent reformist organisations of the same type emerged, too. In 1887, the Hindu Tract Society was founded in Madras, whose goal was, on the one hand, defending the Hindu religion in its old form, and, on the other, open attacks on Christian missionary activities. The members of this society published excerpts from ancient religious

literature and polemic works, and sent out their preachers to denounce the missionaries' subversive activities.

Another Madras society, the Hindu Free Thought Union, published the newspaper *The Thinker*, which led a crusade against superstition, immorality, poverty, and prostitution. The newspaper systematically published articles attacking Christianity and its dogmas. The paper's philosophical positions were marked by a tendency towards the materialist solution of the basic question of philosophy. Contemporaries pointed out that the newspaper openly preached outright atheism and materialism, insisting that the world was formed out of three principles: matter, force, and law. The success of the activities of the Free Thought Union was enormous. Within a few years, it had followers in almost all the cities of India. The frightened colonialists took a number of measures against the members of the Union and suppressed its paper. But the Free Thinkers did not lay down their arms; they regrouped and acted under other names.

The father of the Moslem communal movement, Syed Ahmad Khan, also raised his voice against Christian missionaries and their ideology. In his theological treatise *Khutbat-ul-Ahmadia* he decisively took the side of Moslem theologians in their argument with Christian missionaries who endeavoured to prove that Islam had played a reactionary role in the historical development of Oriental peoples. It was in fact an attempt to refute in religious form the assertion by Christian missionaries concerning the inevitability and necessity of the conquest of the Moslem countries of the East by the Christian states of the West, to defend the right of Moslem peoples to their own development.

The second direction of the struggle against Christianity were the mystic trends of spiritism and theosophy, which gained extensive currency in India. The originators of this trend were a Russian emigrée, Elena N. Blavatsky, and Henry Steel Olcott, a US solicitor, who in 1875 founded the Theosophical Society in New York. In the early 1880s, the headquarters of the Society moved to India. The Society became particularly active when it was headed by Annie Besant, who came to India from Britain in 1893.

Bourgeois Indian historians regard the activities of the Theosophical Society as an important factor in the struggle for social and religious reform, particularly in the southern part of the country. B. N. Luniya, a modern Indian scholar, states with satisfaction in his monograph *Evolution of Indian Culture* that the philosophy of that society was greatly affected by the Upanisads, the Samkhya, Yoga, and Vedanta. The theosophists' principal goal, as the author stresses, was to establish the uniformity of all the religions, explain the significance of spiritual life, cognise the truth, and spread the idea of universal brotherhood. At the same time the author feels grateful to the theosophists for spreading the ideas of pride in their past and faith in a better future amongst Indians; for making Indian occultism popular not only in India but also in the West; promoting the agitation for self-government, *swadeshi* (the use of indigenous products) and such social reforms as abolition of early marriages, *purdah* (seclusion of women,), and elimination of illiteracy and alcoholism; advocating moral and religious education at schools; and supporting education for women.

This description and evaluation of the activities

of the theosophists is typical of bourgeois historical science, but it does not reflect reality in the least. The point is that theosophists were very inventive in exploiting the Indian people's profound patriotism and hatred for the colonialists.

The appearance of a group of foreign theosophists and spiritualists in India was not accidental. As is well known in the 1870s the spiritualist fad swept many countries of Europe as well as the United States of America. Spiritualism is based on the mystical doctrine of the existence of "the other world" and the possibility of direct communication with the spirits of dead persons through mediums. Engels called spiritualism the most preposterous of all superstitions. Spiritualism was particularly dangerous because of the fact that even some scientists went in for it.

In 1875 (the same year in which the Theosophical Society was founded in New York), the Physical Society at the St. Petersburg University set up a committee, at the initiative of the great Russian materialist scientist D. I. Mendeleyev, for investigating mediumistic phenomena. After a year's work the committee came to the conclusion that spiritualist phenomena result from unconscious movements or conscious fraud, while spiritualist doctrine is superstition. In 1876, D. I. Mendeleyev published the book *Materials for Making Judgements on Spiritualism*, in which he wrote that table turning, conversations with invisible beings through rapping, experiments in levitation and materialisation of human figures through mediums are fraught with the danger of spreading mysticism, which can distract many persons from the sensible view of things and increase superstition, for the hypothesis has taken shape that these phenomena are caused by spirits.

Blavatsky, Olcott, Besant, and other peddlars of spiritualism in India were not original. In studying the Upanisads, the philosophical sutras and other religious and philosophical literature, they conscientiously culled all kinds of mystical ideas and facts from them, declaring thereupon that Indian religious mysticism and the data of contemporary natural science were in complete agreement. They insisted, with the most serious air, that they, too, dominated the very forces of nature of which the *rishis* and ascetics, who could levitate and leave their bodies, were aware.

Theosophists laid great stress on spiritualist séances and self-advertising. They claimed to be in communication with the spirits of the ancient saints who had lived thousands of years before in India. According to the theosophists, Mme Blavatsky, who spent many years in Tibet, communicated there with the mahatmas, that is to say, the great forefathers of Indians; assisted by her, any person could be initiated in the mysteries of the world of spirits and communicate with them. As for India's burning social problems, theosophists touched on them only insofar as they felt the need for adapting themselves to the political situation in the country and legalising their activities, which were reactionary in their ideological content.

The third direction of the ideological struggle against Christianity was linked with the Brahmo Samaj religious reformist movement.

Bourgeois historical science usually characterises this trend as "the path of compromise", the reference being to the "peaceful merging" of Christianity and Hinduism. This characteristic is, in our view, incomplete, one-sided, and ultimately incorrect. The point is that, recognising all religions, including Christianity, to be equal, Brahmo Samajits did not at all intend to yield to anyone their ideological positions. Faced with the fact of India's defeat in the great struggle against British colonialists, they regarded the spread of Christianity as one of the manifestations of the "spirit" of the conquerors and advocated, in actual fact, "digesting" or "assimilating" Christian ideas within Hinduism. The practical aspects of this programme and its results will be clear after we consider the views of Ramakrishna, Vivekananda, and Aurobindo Ghose.[1]

[1] Ramakrishna, Vivekananda and Aurobindo Ghose were not formally involved with the Brahmo Samaj movement, but their philosophical positions expressed the essence of that movement.

Chapter 1. DAYANANDA SARASVATI

An important representative of the religious reformist movement in India of that time was Dayananda Mulshankar (1824-1883), who acquired the honorific title of Sarasvati. He became widely known as the founder of the reformist movement in the framework of the Arya Samaj which he founded in 1875.

Dayananda criticised the Vedanists' idealistic monism (including Ramakrishna's), positing the idea of the existence of three independent substances: Brahman (also referred to as God), the soul (*atman*), and matter (*prakrti*).

Dayananda expressed his attitude to the basic question of philosophy in his book *Satyartha Prakasha* (Light of Truth). In the eighth chapter of the book he writes that Brahman alone is worthy of cognition, for everything in the universe is born, lives, and disintegrates owing to Brahman. In answering the question, "What did the universe originate from, God or something else?", Dayananda says: its efficient cause is God, and its material cause is *prakrti* (materia radica).[1]

[1] Dayananda explains this by giving the following example: a pot has three causes:

(a) *nimitta karana*, that is, the producing (efficient) cause (the potter who made the pot);

(b) *upadana karana*, that is, the material cause (the clay of which the pot was made);

(c) *sadharana karana*, that is, the auxiliary cause (the tool with the help of which the pot was made, as well as the place where it was produced, the time, etc.).

In the same chapter the following dialogue is given. *Question*: Did God create *prakrti*? *Dayananda*: No, *prakrti* has no beginning. *Question*: What does the word "beginning" mean and how many are the things that have no beginning? *Dayananda*: God, the soul, and the material cause of the universe have no beginning.

Thus God, the soul, and *prakrti* are correlated within the universe as "three causes": the efficient, the auxiliary, and the material.

God is the highest form of being, the "supreme spirit" dominating all and needing no matter for its existence.

The souls (numerous but finite in number), or the "lower spirits" are immaterial but need matter for their growth and development. The spirits, in Dayananda's words, are imperfect but essentially progressive; they are doubly dependent — on God ("the spiritual leadership") and on material implements (the concrete conditions and forms of being).[1]

Matter (*prakrti*) is something inert and unspiritual. The world of heterogeneous things is built

[1] Dayananda's teaching of the soul includes the following doctrines: the soul is eternal, i. e., it is neither born nor does it die; souls are numerous; they are limited as to knowledge and strength; they are imperfect but progressive, i. e., they desire something better for their being and do their best to implement these desires; their bodies or "physical lives" are merely short "periods" on their way to progress and the length of the period depends on the abilities and diligence of the individual in question; man or woman, animal or human, bird or insect — all of these are names for incarnations of souls (but not the souls themselves); birth and death are moments in the eternal cycle of rise and fall; the concept of liberation of the soul signifies merely a relative finale of a phenomenon known as "the cycle of life".

of this dead and inert, eternal, undifferentiated, and homogeneous matter.

Dayananda believes that all the laws of the material world function under the power of God; any action which we observe in the surrounding world is intended for the benefit of souls and fulfilment of their desires; matter creates the conditions for (and thereby helps) the souls without depriving them of freedom. In other words, Dayananda objects to the view of the world as the condition and source of suffering, and to the view of souls as prisoners in the jail of matter. This view, writes Dayananda deprives the world of all its fascination and presents God as a prisoner. The real correlation between God, soul, and matter consists in that God is the centre of the universe; the soul is connected with God but is not identical with him; they relate as the vessel and its contents; matter is an idependent substance forming the world of objects and phenomena.

Recognising matter as an objectively existing substance was not accidental in Dayananda's case. Proceeding from this "realistic" premise, he hoped to take philosophy down from the heights of abstract constructions ("illusions") and direct man's will and reason to worldly occupations. The premise itself signified, in our view, a kind of concession to materialism, which is borne out by Dayananda's epistemology.

Dayananda criticised Kant for his agnosticism, for his insistence that things are unknowable, rather than for postulating the existence of things-in-themselves. He wrote that cognition (*vidya*) consists in knowing a thing precisely as it is, while agnosticism consists in knowing a thing that is different from what it is. Criticising the Kantian proposition

concerning the a priori nature of space and time, Dayananda insisted that *akasha* (space) and *kala* (time) exist outside us.

Dayananda distinguished three elements in the process of cognition: cognition through the senses (*indriyas*), cognition through reason (*manas*) and cognition through the soul (*atman*) or the ego. Man's inner self is the knower of truth and untruth. According to Dayananda, untruth signifies falsity or error in knowledge rather than absence of knowledge. He who knows untruth is also a knower; he is informed. He who knows may make a mistake, e. g., assuming that the book is on the table whereas it is actually in the table, but he is still "one that knows".

Reason, in Dayananda's view, is a sixth sense, so that in conjunction with the *indriyas*[1] it provides man with perceptions only. Knowledge that we obtain through what is contacted by the ears, skin, eyes, tongue, nose, and reason, namely sound, touch, shape, taste, colour, satisfaction, pain, truth, untruth, etc., is perception.

At the same time reason is not a *tabula rasa*, for it would be passive in that case. In actual fact reason produces knowledge which it has not received from the sense organs. The sense organs are not the gates through which all impressions may pass. Our eyes, for instance, do not receive all visual impressions; our ears do not hear all the sounds, etc.[2]

Warning against the error of one-sidedness in

[1] The Sanskrit word *indriya* is etymologically equivalent to "organ".

[2] At the same time Dayananda insists that sensory data are reliable, and he who rejects their reliability arrives at absurdities in the process of cognition.

the approach to cognition, Dayananda points out, for instance, that if only sensations are recognised as the source of cognition, while other kinds of evidence are ignored, many things remain inaccessible to us. The possibility of knowing oneself is excluded, among other things, for an eye may see other things but it cannot see itself. Consequently, other types of evidence are necessary.[1] The senses cannot give man the idea of causality either, which, though it is based on sensory data, can only emerge (through deduction) in reason.

The Sanskrit word for deduction is *anumana* (*anu* meaning "after"). Knowledge arising after sense perception is called deduction. For instance, the conclusion that there is fire on a mountain cannot be made until smoke is seen.

Dayananda distinguishes three kinds of deduction:

(1) progressive deduction, that is, deduction of effect from cause, e. g.: a cloud is coming this way; consequently, it will rain;

(2) regressive deduction, that is, deduction of cause from effect, e. g.: streams have started running into the valley from the mountain; consequently, it has rained up there in the mountains;

(3) attendant deduction. Here there are no cause-and-effect relations between phenomena, as in the case of syllogism, but there are certain attendant circumstances. The law of attending circumstances is in the final analysis also based on the law of causality. For instance, no one can move from one place to another without travelling the distance between them.

[1] Apart from sensations, Dayananda includes among evidence (or proof) deduction, analogy, and authority (referring to the authority of someone who has genuine knowledge (*aapta*)— the teacher, the Vedas, etc.

Perception, according to Dayananda, affords man the knowledge of attributes, that is, of concrete things and their properties, but not of substance. Knowledge of substance is the prerogative of the soul which perceives, through reason, matter and other substances. The soul is capable of learning more than the sensations and reason taken together report to it, obtaining some of the knowledge in an a priori fashion.

Dayananda refers to knowledge obtained by the soul as *pratyaksha*, or intuition. Intuition is recognised only on the following three conditions.

The first condition is that the intuition must have for its object substance and not attributes or terms expressing them. For instance, a certain person asks another, "Fetch me some water." The person who fetches the water says: "Here is the water." In this case the object of intuition is water itself, that is, the object named "water", and not the person who asked for water or the one who brought it. Knowledge obtained with words and in the form of words is "verbal knowledge" (*shabdha pramana*).

The second condition is constancy or immutability (*vyabhichari*). For instance, someone gazing into the night darkness took a post for a man. When that person looks at the post in the daytime, the knowledge that it was a man will disappear, to be replaced by other knowledge: "That is (was) a post". Knowledge which disappears in this manner is called variable (*vyabhichari*) and cannot be included in the category of intuitive knowledge.

The third condition is conviction (*vyavasayatmaka*). Let us consider the following example. For instance, someone seeing a sandy bank asks:

"What is there on the bank — clothes spread, or is it something else?" Or else suppose someone asks: "Who is it standing over there, Dewadatta or Yajnadatta?" This knowledge cannot be intuitive either, for it does not carry conviction or confidence.

Thus intuition (*pratyaksha*) is knowledge which must not derive from names; must not be variable; and must be convincing.

The impulse towards cognitive activity comes from the inside, according to Dayananda. The learner is compelled to use his cognitive apparatus by something that is inherent in him, call it will or whatever you like. On an inner impulse, a child stretches out a hand to touch a thing and to learn whether it is soft or hard, cold or hot. In short, Dayananda failed to recognise (or to realise) that, in the words of Goethe's Faust, *am Anfang war die Tat*, that labour and man's social practical activity in general constitute the beginning of all human beginnings, including the beginning of cognition.

Characteristic of Dayananda's socio-political views is his adherence to the idea of rebuilding Indian society on bourgeois principles. He put forward the idea of constructing an ideal society in India, in which all men would only be equal in the face of God, for inequality with regard to ownership of property is retained. In accordance with the property qualification, this society is divided into castes.[1] The state is headed by a just and impartial monarch.

Dayananda believed the spreading of foreign

[1] The traditional division of the population into castes according to the estate principle would be abolished, according to Dayananda.

ideology and encroachments of other faiths, in particular of Islam and Christianity, as well as the economic dominance of the foreigners (that is, British colonialists), to be the greatest obstacles in the way of formation of an ideal society in India. He took a militant stand towards these religions. As Romain Rolland correctly put it, Dayananda declared war on Christianity and had no great regard for the Koran either; at the same time he trampled the body of Brahmanical orthodoxy.

Dayananda believed that new India must be built on an economic and spiritual foundation of her own. For this reason, the monistic Vedanta prevailing in India at that time and the whole of the orthodox Hinduism, burdened with mysticism and crude cult forms, could not serve that noble purpose. Dayananda turned to rationalism, endeavouring to reform Hinduism on that basis. His slogan "Back to the Vedas" signified a call for reviving national traditions, for reform within Hinduism and ruthless condemnation of the other faiths.

Dayananda preached worshipping a single God and condemned polytheism; he opposed caste restrictions, early marriages, the *purdah* system, conservatism, and illiteracy; he advocated abolition of untouchability, emancipation of women, and the development of education in Sanskrit and Hindi. To consolidate the national forces, he organised the *shuddhi* movement for returning to the womb of Hinduism of all kinds of odd men out — converts to other religions and everyone who was outside Hinduism.

In his works and translations from the Vedas, Dayananda again revived the democratic traditions of the Hindu religion which Brahmans

passed over in silence. He criticised such features of Hinduism as idol worship, the notion of an illusory nature of all that is, the inescapable power of fate and man's impotence in the face of it, etc. Condemning the idea of passive humility in the face of fate, the reformer called upon his followers to act vigorously. He was convinced that with the aid of science man would be able to exploit the forces of nature for his own benefit and thereby improve the conditions of his existence.

Chapter 2. SYED AHMAD KHAN

Islam, too, became involved in religious reform. The bourgeois nationalist movement of Moslem intellectuals (with the headquarters at Aligarh) was an attempt to synthesise the attainments of the West and the Indian cultural heritage, to create a new, reformed religion, and to interpret the Koran in the spirit of rationalism and adjustment to the latest achievements of science. The principal ideologues and theoreticians of nationalism among Moslems, just as among Hindus, simultaneously acted as political leaders and religious reformers.

Syed Ahmad Khan (1817-1898) was an outstanding representative of this movement. His main works are *The Causes of the Indian Revolt* (1858), *Commentary on the Bible* (1862), and *Letters from England* (1869). The activities of Syed Ahmad Khan are intimately linked with the formation and rise of the Indian nation in the areas where Islam was dominant. A socio-political figure and thinker, Syed Ahmad Khan was a striking embodiment of the complexity and contradictoriness of the historical destinies of the Moslem community.

By the 1870s and 1880s, the upper strata of the Moslem community lagged considerably behind the upper classes of other communities and peoples of India in the economic, political, and cultural respects, which was largely explained by the policy of the British. Syed Ahmad Khan

advocated reform in the Moslem community, in education and religion, which had to be adapted to the needs of bourgeois development. He aspired to synthesise Moslem culture and the bourgeois ideology of the West, persuading the Moslem upper classes to assimilate European education and culture.

In putting forward the idea of a reform ("purification") of the religion of Islam, Syed Ahmad Khan defended belief in a single God, and opposed idolatry, worshipping prophets and saints, marriage and burial ceremonies, ornamenting graves, tombs, temples, and giving presents to the clergy. He published a monthly, *Tehzib-ul-Akhlaq* (Perfection of Morality), which was intended to stimulate the feeling of self-confidence among Moslems. Syed Ahmad Khan wrote that the periodical was founded with the aim of arousing the Moslems' desire for mastering the highest stages of culture so that civilised peoples could have no grounds for treating Moslems with contempt, and that they might be regarded as a cultured and educated people in all the countries of the world. The aspirations of the entire humanity, morality, life, society, culture and the ways of its development, science and art of all epochs — all of this had to become the object of profound study and assimilation.

During the first period of his activity, Syed Ahmad Khan called for unity of all Indian peoples and communities, particularly of Hindus and Moslems. The good of Hindus and Moslems, he wrote, lies in that they should regard themselves as one nation. Moreover, he acted as a preacher and organiser of Wahabiism — one of the most effective Islamic sects. The Wahabi sect, apart

from fighting for the purification of the Islamic religion, conducted the so-called holy war against infidels, that is, Sikhs, Hindus, and the British. In actual fact the struggle was mostly directed against the British. Wahabis did not restrict their activities to preaching *jihad* on the British; they took energetic action as well. Apart from isolated raids on British garrisons, they succeeded in stirring a number of major peasant revolts not only against the British but also against Indian feudal lords.

The situation soon changed, however. Following the divide-and-rule policy, colonialists succeeded in introducing discord in the national movement of India. They used towards this purpose the Moslem community and its reactionary feudal upper strata frightened by the growing movement of the masses. The rapprochement between the Moslem feudal reactionaries and the British was based in the first place on their struggle against India's revolutionary and progressive forces. Considerations of foreign policy also played a role. One must be more cautious, warned the well-known British colonial official Wilfrid Blunt, otherwise "all the external world will appear to the Indians under a friendly guise, and Russia as being the nearest, under the most friendly".[1]

The religious discord between Hindus and Moslems was also turned to good account by the colonialists, and neither did they miss the personal qualities of Syed Ahmad Khan, the scion of a noble Moslem house, who by that time had published a number of statements proclaiming

[1] W. S. Blunt, *India under Ripon*, T. Fisher Unwin, London, 1909, pp. 292-293.

his loyalty to the British.[1] There was one thing, actually, which the British demanded as payment for economic and political assistance to the Moslem community — weakening of and divisions in the national liberation movement in India. In a sense, the Moslem upper crust led by Syed Ahmad Khan became party to this shady transaction.

With the formation of the Indian National Congress (1885) Syed Ahmad Khan's views take the final turn towards opposing Moslems to Hindus. The "friend of the British Rule"[2] became head of the Moslem feudal opposition to the bourgeois Congress.

Syed Ahmad Khan believed the absence of modern European education to be the main reason of poverty, and of economic, political, and cultural backwardness of Indian Moslems. Moreover, in his opinion, education could remove prejudice and, at the same time, unite the people and their rulers. The main condition of the strength and prosperity of any country was, Syed Ahmad Khan believed, a high level of development of culture and technology. Enlightenment is the motive force of progress and the cure for all social and political misfortunes.

Syed Ahmad Khan's cultural and enlightening activities included the founding of the Translation Society, which translated from English into Urdu socio-historical and literary works; publication of

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[1] As early as the end of 1858, in his work *The Causes of the Indian Revolt*, Syed Ahmad Khan expressed the view that the greatest evil came from the Indians failing to understand the laws and measures of the government; thus he ignored the fact that the laws were aimed against the people.

[2] Thus did the English paper *Pall Mall* refer to Syed Ahmad Khan.

the first literary and publicistic newspaper in Urdu; the founding of the Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College at Alligarh, whose principal goal was making Indian Moslems "worthy and useful subjects" of the British crown.

There were many outstanding figures of the Moslem community among Syed Ahmad Khan's colleagues. They were nevertheless a narrow circle, alien to the people and separated from them. Jawaharlal Nehru correctly pointed out that "Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's influence was confined to certain sections of the upper classes among the Moslems; he did not touch the urban and rural masses. These masses were almost completely cut off from their upper classes and were far nearer to the Hindu masses".[1] However, Syed Ahmad Khan and his followers succeeded to some extent "in diverting the Moslem mind from the political movement".[2]

The historical and socio-economic realities of the life of the Moslem community of the times, in particular the contradictory tendencies in the position and the political views of the Moslem upper class, made an essential impact on the philosophical views of Syed Ahmad Khan. On the whole, they were objective-idealist views.

Nature, according to Syed Ahmad Khan, was created by God and is governed by his will. God is the first cause of all phenomena. The immutable laws of nature are manifestations of divine will. God, according to Syed Ahmad Khan, is the creator of religion.

From these positions, the Moslem reformer

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[1] J. Nehru, *op. cit.*, p. 366.

[2] *Ibid.*

endeavoured to justify and sanction (or sanctify), on the authority of the Koran, the assimilation of the attainments of European science and technology and the bridging of the gulf between Islam and natural science, between faith and reason.

Syed Ahmad Khan actually believed the whole of the range of human knowledge to be the subject matter of philosophy. He thought, however, that the term knowledge was only applicable to the activity of reason — the only instrument which man is capable of using for learning the truth. He rejected divine revelation as a source of knowledge. Reason's cognitive activity is, in Syed Ahmad Khan's view, rigidly determined in all aspects by God and goal-directed. Through reason, man cognises the laws of nature and uses them in his interests. The strength and the practical effect of man's activity depend on the degree of development of his abilities. Thus man is not only a servant of God but also a free agent.

Proceeding from this assumption, Syed Ahmad Khan rejected the need for religious prophecies, to which the only alternative he believed to be knowledge, education, and reasonable prediction. He also stressed that the growth of wealth and the rate of society's progressive development were determined not only by the depth but also by the social extent of education, that is to say, the extent to which the common people, the masses were involved in education.

Syed Ahmad Khan believed the extreme backwardness, ignorance and poverty of the people of India to be the main cause of her loss of independence, and he built his theoretical justification of the British rule on that basis. In his opinion, Indians had no strength to attain progress themselves and had no other way out but to let another people give them assistance in laying the foundations for the development of their mental powers. He maintained that after the basis of their revival had been laid, the Indian people would be able to attain their progress themselves.

Thus, on one hand, the rationalist tendency in Syed Ahmad Khan's worldview restricted ("purified") the Islamic religion, freeing it to some extent from the excessive load of mysticism and dogmatism which stood in the way of the rise and consolidation of the national forces, while, on the other hand, political calculations inclined him to compromise with the colonialists, to the path of separatism and nationalist or communal limitations.

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Various societies and groups of enlighteners and reformers which sprang up in the second half of the 19th century in diverse areas of the country (Bengal, Punjab, Maharashtra) were active in spreading the ideas of national unity and patriotism throughout India. Although the activities of these societies were usually religious or even mystical in form, their purpose was essentially bourgeois liberation.

The above-mentioned religious reformist society Arya Samaj, for instance, made "Back to the Vedas" its principal slogan, but when one considers the activity of this society more closely, the idea of a return to the past proves to be merely an attempt to adapt reformed Hinduism to the needs of bourgeois development.

In Bengal, a whole constellation of patriots went into action, their headquarters being the *Hindoo Patriot* journal. It published the works of Bankim Chandra Chatterji, Vivekananda, of the young Rabindranath Tagore and many others, who called upon their countrymen to fight against foreign domination and race discrimination, for freedom, equality, and brotherhood of all the strata of the Indian population. These progressive bourgeois intellectuals declared the ideology of *sanatana* (orthodox Hinduism) to be the national ideology, endeavoring to renovate it to suit the new historical conditions.

The struggle, within the framework of that ideology, for rousing the national self-awareness of the Indian people and consolidating the country's national forces took the form of various movements — for promoting national industry, science, language, music, theatre, etc. The national literature also took shape on this basis.

One of the major ideological movements in Bengal was headed by an organisation called Hindu Mela, or Jatia Mela, led by Raj Narain Basu, Dvidjendranath Tagore and Ganendranath Tagore, Man Mohan Ghose, and others.

Speaking before the members of his organisation, Raj Narain Basu said: "With every passing day, we depend more and more on England. We need clothes, but if we do not get them from England, we have nothing to wear. If England makes no knives or scissors, we shall not have them. If salt is not brought from England, we shall have nothing with which to salt our food. If matches are not brought from England, we shall have nothing with which to kindle fire. We do not produce anything."[1]

[1] Kabiraj Narahari, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

At the second session of the Hindu Mela, Man Mohan Ghose called upon the audience to sow the seeds of unity, for only from those seeds, he said, could the beautiful tree grow that would bear the fruit of freedom and independence of the country. It was he who wrote:

> Do you hear the smith groan as he works the bellows,
> And the weaver, as he weaves the cloth.
> How hard it is for them to earn their bread,
> For the hard times of the country are come!

And further:

> Their diligent labour is no longer needed,
> For even a thread and a needle,
> Even a match to kindle a lamp
> Are brought here from over the seas.
> Today the people of my country
> Cannot eat or drink or make a step
> Of their own free will.[1]

The young Rabindranath Tagore called upon the people to fight the colonialist yoke, angrily denouncing those who collaborated with the British and praised them for their "civilising" mission in India. In 1877, he read a poem at a Jatia Mela session which says, among other things:

> Praising the British yoke,
> The princes hurry
> To bow their heads to the feet of the foreigners.
> They are in such a hurry that they drop their crowns covered with jewels.

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 95.

Here is the Raja of Jaipur running, followed
by the Raja, of Jodhpur.
Forgetting their conscience and shame,
the heroes rush as a mob!

Oh suffering India,
Do these men feel proud
Of the shameful yoke
On your neck?
Isn't your heart pained
As you hear their praises?
No, however sweet they may sing
The praises of the conquerors,
We shall not sing those songs,
We shall not sing those songs,
But, uniting our strength,
We shall sing a new song![1]

Vedantist philosophers were intent on the search for a "new song", that is, the new ideology which would light the way to the building of a free and independent India.

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[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 96-97.

Chapter 3. RAMAKRISHNA

One of the major representatives of the Indian reform movement was the Bengali Ramakrishna Paramahamsa (his real name was Gadadhar Chatterjee).

Ramakrishna (1834-1886) was born into a poor Brahman's family. He did not receive a systematic education, studying mostly the dogmas and rites of various religions — Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, and Christianity. He did not write books or leave us any philosophical treatises. He expressed his views in oral form, through the images of his parables. In the words of his contemporaries, Ramakrishna had a striking intellect and acute insight into the real nature of things and phenomena. Using the most ordinary events of everyday life as his illustrations, he managed to compel even the frequently very rigid minds of his listeners to grasp the spiritual depth, beauty and grandeur of the ideas that were his life. He poured new life in each word he pronounced, so that it touched the very souls of his listeners.

Ramakrishna believed that all religions ultimately teach one and the same thing, and that the gods of the different religions are the same being. Some refer to him as Allah, others, Brahman, still others, Kali or Rama, Hari, Buddha, etc. Just as one and the same substance, he said, for instance, water, is called by different names by different people (water, or *aqua*, or *eau*), so is one and the same Eternal

Reasonable Bliss recognised as Allah by some, God by others, Brahman by still others, etc.

The assertions like "my religion is the truth and all the others are false" cannot be true, according to Ramakrishna, for all religions are merely different ways towards one and the same goal — God. People who insist that only their religion is true, says the philosopher, are like the blind men arguing about the appearance of the elephant, as in the well-known parable.

"Four blind men went to see an elephant. One touched a leg of the elephant and said: 'The elephant is like a pillar.' The second touched the trunk and said: 'The elephant is like a thick club.' The third touched the belly and said: 'The elephant is like a huge jar.' The fourth touched the ears and said: 'The elephant is like a big winnowing-basket'."[1] A heated debate followed.

Pointing out that sectarian strife betwen different religions was meaningless and harmful, Ramakrishna stressed that God has an infinity of aspects.

"Two persons were hotly disputing as to the colour of a chameleon. One said: 'The chameleon on that palm-tree is of a red colour.' The other, contradicting him, replied: 'You are mistaken, the chameleon is not red but blue.' Not being able to settle the matter by argument, both went to the person who always lived under that tree and had watched the chameleon in all its phases of colour. One of them asked him: 'Sir, is not the chameleon on that tree red?' The person replied: 'Yes, sir.' The other disputant said: 'What do you say? It is not red, it is blue.' The person again humbly replied: 'Yes, sir.' The person knew that the chameleon is an animal which constantly changes its colour; thus it was that he said 'yes' to both these conflicting statements."[2]

God is multiform, "He is formless and with form, and many are His forms which no one knows".[3]

[1] *Memoirs of Ramakrishna*, Ramakrishna Vedanta Math., Calcutta, 1957, pp. 23-24.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 24-25.

[3] *Ibid.*

God "can take the form of Krishna, Christ or any other Incarnation". Being "formless", He is "indivisible existence-intelligence-bliss absolute"[1] (the Sat-chit-ananda).

Ramakrishna was a follower of the Vedanta philosophy. However, his Vedanta was distinctly different from the previous forms of this philosophy, those linked with the names of Samkara and Ramanuja. Samkara's *advaita* (absolute monism), assuming the identity of being and consciousness, appeared too abstract to Ramakrishna. He could not accept *advaita's* thesis that the visible world and the individual souls (viewed as independent entities with regard to the human body) are a set of merely illusory, phenomenal changes. As early as the 12th century, Ramanuja imposed certain restrictions on *advaita*. In his *vishishtadvaita* (limited monism) he asserted that the world was not illusory but a manifestation of the absolute spiritual substance — Brahman.

Ramakrishna extended his objective idealism to the phenomena of social life. He describes the relations between the absolute and the phenomena through the following image:

"In a wood-apple (Bael fruit) there are seeds, pulp and the shell. When I take the pulp, I leave out the seeds and the shell; but when I speak of the weight of the wood-apple, the weight of the pulp alone would not be equal to it. You will have to weigh the pulp, seeds, shell and everything. That which has pulp has also seeds and shell. Similarly, that which is the Absolute has also all phenomena."[2]

Philosophers following monistic Vedanta (*advaita*) see this world as unreal or similar to sleep.

[1] *Ibid.*

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 78.

According to their teaching, *parmatman*, or the supreme soul, is the witness of the three states of consciousness; the waking state, the dream state, and dreamless sleep. All of these are ideas. The state of sleep is just as real as waking.

Ramakrishna cites the following example to illustrate the way this philosophy works in real life.

"There was a farmer who was a monist; he had attained to some realisation [that is, direct perception of high ideas — *N.B.*] He lived like any other farmer with his family, and he had a child. He and his wife had extreme love for this son because he was their only child. The farmer himself was a very spiritual man. He was respected and loved by everyone in the village. Once he was working in the field, when suddenly a man brought the news of his son's severe illness. He went home, called physicians, took great care, but could not save the child's life. Everybody in the household was overwhelmed with grief, but the farmer looked as if nothing had happened. He consoled others by saying: 'What can be gained by mourning over the child?' The next day he went to the field as usual, and after finishing his work he came home and found his wife and the other members of the family still weeping and wailing and plunged in deep sorrow. The wife reproached him, saying: 'How heartless you are! You have not shed a single drop of tears for your only child.' The farmer then calmly replied: 'Shall I tell you why I do not weep? Last night I had a wonderful dream. I saw that I was a king, and the father of eight beautiful children, and that I was enjoying all the pleasures and comforts of life. Suddenly I woke up and the dream passed away. Now I am in great confusion,— whether I shall weep and wail for my eight children or for this only one.'

"The farmer was an Advaita Jnani, therefore he realised that the waking state was as unreal as the dream state, and that the one permanent reality was Atman. But I [says Ramakrishna] accept all states as true,— the state of samadhi, which is the fourth state, and again, the waking dream and dreamless sleep. I accept Brahman the Absolute and Maya, Jiva (the individual soul) and the world.

If I do not take all, a portion will be missing and the weight will be less."[1]

The totality of natural phenomena, according to Ramakrishna, are gross, subtle, and causal states, or bodies (*karanas*).[2] They flare up in the Absolute just as the sound d-o-n-g of a big bell. "The phenomena of the universe like the gross, subtle and causal states appear to come out and go back to the Absolute... From the same Absolute, again, which is the fourth state, come the other three states of consciousness. The waves of the ocean are once more dissolved in the ocean. By this illustration of d-o-n-g I explain that the eternal word Om is symbolic of the evolution and involution of phenomena from and into the Absolute. I have seen all these things...".[3]

Thus Ramakrishna recognises the reality of the material world (the relative world), regarding it as a manifestation of Brahman (the absolute world). At the same time he metaphysically opposes these worlds to each other. Nothing that takes place in the material world, says Ramakrishna, affects the world of Brahman. "Good and evil, virtue and vice are to be found in this world of relativity; but Brahman is unaffected by them. They exist in relation to Jiva (individual ego), but cannot touch the absolute Brahman. Brahman may be compared to the light of a lamp. As by the same light one may

[1] *Memoirs of Ramakrishna*, pp. 76-77.
[2] *Karana* — causal body created from joy.
[3] Here Ramakrishna refers to his personal experiences of falling into the *samadhi* state.

read the holy scriptures and another may forge a document, while the light remains unaffected by the good and evil deeds, so is the absolute Brahman untouched by the good and evil of the world. He is like the sun who shines equally upon the virtuous and the wicked."[1]

The changeable material world, being Brahman's dream, as Ramakrishna believes, is not adequate to its cause, the primordial basis from which it flows. It is mutable and multiform, but it is impossible to attain Brahman proceeding from its peripheral nature.

Only the highest form of animation — human animation freed from the concrete relativity of human existence and from being part of the phenomenal world — merges with the highest form of animation — the world consciousness or Brahman.

The philosopher thus approaches the problem of correlation of the general and the particular as a mystic.

He uses the following comparison to express the idea of unity and identity of Jiva and Brahman. If you hold a stick on the surface of a stream, the water will appear to be divided into two parts, although in actual fact water is undivided. It appears to be divided because of the presence of the stick in it. Eliminate that restricting addition, and the stream will be one and indivisible. Ramakrishna believes the soul to be that very cementing material which integrates within a single whole the interacting constituent parts of the human personality. If Brahman ("the world consciousness") pulls out the soul from the human body, the personality disintegrates. A magnetic rock hidden under water

[1] *Memoirs of Ramakrishna*, p. 86.

pulls out all the iron nails from a passing ship, so that the boards of which it is made fall apart and the ship flounders. The human soul is attracted by the magnetism of the world consciousness in the same way: it destroys the personality in a single moment.

The opposition between the phenomenal world and the world of Brahman is linked with the two forms of knowledge which Ramakrishna recognises, untrue (*avidya*) and true (*vidya*). *Avidya* is knowledge of the objects and phenomena of nature. As for Brahman, it is above attainment by mind and thought, inexpressible and indescribable. "Knowledge of diversity is ignorance. The egotism bred of erudition proceeds from ignorance. That knowledge by which we know that God exists everywhere is true knowledge."[1]

Being a Yogi, Ramakrishna believed that Brahman is only perceived in a superconscious state called *samadhi*, when the flow of thought stops and absolute silence reigns in the soul. "He who has realised Brahman," says Ramakrishna, "becomes silent."

"If you melt butter in a pan over fire, how long does it make a noise? So long as there is water in it. When the water is evaporated it ceases to make further noise. Again if you throw a piece of dough in that hot clarified butter (ghee) there will be a noise until the cake is thoroughly fried. The soul of a seeker after Brahman may be compared to fresh butter. It is mixed with the water of egoism and worldliness. Discussions and argumentations (*vichara*) of a seeker are like the noise caused during the process of purification by the fire of knowledge.

As the water of egoism and worldliness is evaporated and the soul becomes purer, all noise of debates and discussions ceases and absolute silence reigns in the state of samadhi."[2]

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 316.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 89-90.

At the same time Ramakrishna takes virtually agnostic positions on the question of knowability of the essence of Brahman. "What the Absolute" (Brahman) "is no one can tell," says Ramakrishna. "He who has attained the Absolute (through *samadhi*) cannot give any information about it."

"Four travellers discovered a place enclosed by a high wall, with no opening anywhere. They were very anxious to see what was inside. So one of them climbed up to the top of the wall and as he looked in, he shouted with amazement and joy, 'Ha! ha! ha!' and without giving any information to his fellow-travellers, he jumped inside. The others did likewise. Whoever climbs up to the top of the wall jumps inside with extreme joy and never comes back, because after attaining the highest knowledge of Brahman, one absolutely loses the sense of 'I'. The mind ceases to be active and all sense consciousness vanishes."[1]

One can only perceive Brahman with one's soul, merging with it and dissolving in it just as salt dissolves in water. By merging in Brahman, man ceases to be man in the "earthly" sense.

"A doll made of salt once went to the ocean to measure its depth. It had a desire to tell the others how deep was the ocean. Alas, its desire was never satisfied. No sooner had it plunged into the ocean than it melted away and became one with the ocean. Who would bring the news regarding the depth? Similar is the condition of Jiva (individual ego) who enters into the infinite Ocean of the absolute Brahman."[2]

Ramakrishna believed the question of the meaning of human life on this earth to be the pivotal point of his teaching. In his view, mankind is a great multitude of souls (*Jivas*) caught in the net of Maya. The meaning of man's life is in his soul rending the net, working free of it, and regaining free-

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 208-09.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 89.

dom. But gaining freedom is not so simple as it may seem. Ohe has to fight long and persistently to do that. The thing is complicated by the fact that not all souls behave in a similar way.

According to the type of "behaviour", Ramakrishna divides the human souls into four principal classes, explaining his ideas, as usual, in the form of parables, stories, or comparisons.

"When a fisherman draws in his net, some of the fish try to escape by rending the net, that is, they struggle for freedom. So are the souls of the second class, the mumukshus, the seekers after freedom. But among the fish that struggle, only a few escape. Similarly a few souls only attain to freedom and they belong to the third class, the muktas. There are some fish, however, that are naturally cautious and never fall into the net. Such are the souls of the fourth class, the nitya-muktas, who are never caught in the net of the phenomenal world, but who remain eternally free...

"Most of the fish, however, fall into the net and have not the sense to know that they are going to die there. When caught, they try to run away and hide in the mud at the bottom by swimming with the net. They make no effort to get out of the net, but go deeper and deeper into the mud. These may be compared to the souls who are bound fast in the world. They are caught in the net, but they delude themselves by thinking that they are happy. They remain attached to worldliness. They plunge into the mire of worldly evils and are content, while those who are seeking after freedom or who are emancipated do not like worldliness and do not care for sense-pleasures.

"Those who are thus caught in the net of the world are baddha, or bound souls. No one can awaken them. They do not come to their senses even after receiving blow upon blow of misery, sorrow and indescribable suffering. The camel loves thorny bushes, and although his mouth bleeds when he eats them, still he does not cease to love them dearly and no one can keep him away from them. The bound souls may meet with great grief and misfortune, but after a few days they are just as they were before. The wife may die or become unchaste, the man will marry again; his son may die, he will be extremely sorrowful, but he will soon forget him..."[1]

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 36-38.

What is the reason why souls are so bound to the world? Ramakrishna's answer is that the sense of "I" is the whole cause. "...When 'I' is dead, all troubles cease."

"This sense of 'I' is like a thick cloud. As a small cloud can hide the glorious sun, so this cloud of 'I' hides the glory of the eternal Sun... Look at me. I cover my face with this handkerchief and you cannot see me; still my face is there.... The soul in its true nature is absolute existence, intelligence and bliss, but on account of Maya or the sense of 'I', it has forgotten its real Self and has become entangled in the meshes of the various limitations of mind and body.

"Each attribute limits the soul and modifies its nature. He who dresses smartly will naturally sing love-songs, play cards and carry a walking stick, and such things will appeal to him. If you have a pencil in your hand, you will unconsciously scribble on anything; such is the power of the pencil. Money has great power. When a man becomes wealthy, his nature is entirely changed. He is a different being. A poor Brahman, for instance, used to come here. He was very humble. He lived on the other side of the Ganges. One day as I was landing from a boat, I saw him sitting at the riverside. Seeing me, he shouted in a disrespectful tone: 'Hello! Is it you, my good fellow?' Immediately I understood that he had got hold of some money, otherwise he would not dare to address me thus.... Such is the power of wealth. It makes one so egoistic."[1]

The *advaita* proposition that one and the same divine substance, Brahman, underlies everything that is, was regarded by Ramakrishna as proof of the identity, or kinship, of human souls, for all of them are manifestations of a single substance. On these grounds he spoke of the equality of all men, including Indians and Englishmen, and naively

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 42-44.

believed that if one appealed to the colonialists' human essence, one could persuade them to alleviate the plight of the Indian people.

You must not be confused, said Ramakrishna, by the fact that different persons treat you in different ways. You can get anything from people: kindness and evil, love and hatred, gentle courtesy and rude physical violence. But all of this is the work of Maya and in no way expresses the human soul and essence. From the standpoint of the soul, all men are equal. But it is not everyone that can immediately understand that standpoint or, still less, make it the rule of one's personal behaviour. However, there are instances of successful mastering of the standpoint, he insisted.

"There was a Hindu monastery in a certain village. The monks of the monastery went out every day with begging bowls to gather food. One day a monk, passing by, saw a zemindar severely beating a poor man. The holy man, being very kind-hearted, entreated the zemindar to stop beating the man. The zemindar, blind with rage, immediately turned on the monk and began to beat him until he was knocked unconscious on the ground. Another man, seeing his condition, went to the monastery and told what had happened. His brother monks ran to the spot where the holy man was lying. They lifted him and brought him to the monastery and laid him in a room; but the holy man still remained unconscious for a long time. Sorrowful and anxious, his brothers fanned him, batted his face, put milk into his mouth and tried to nurse him back to life. Gradually they brought him back to consciousness. The holy man opened his eyes and looked at his fellow-brethren. One of them, desiring to know whether he could recognize his friends, asked him in a loud vioce: "Mahârâj, dost you recognize him who is feeding thee with milk?' The holy man answered in a feeble voice: "Brother, he who beat me is now feeding me.'"[1]

That is, in Ramakrishna's opinion, an example of a person (the monk) learning to feel the unity and

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 72-73.

kinship of all souls and thereby rising above vice and virtue, kindness and evil.

Logically connected with the doctrine of the unity and kinship of all human souls is the idea of non-resistance to evil by violence. He resolutely objected to fighting evil on the principle of "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth". The trend of his reasoning is typical of a mystical idealist.

Brahman manifests itself in all the objects and phenomena of the outside world, consequently Brahman lives in water too. But there are all kinds of water: some may be used for drinking purposes, some for bathing or washing, while dirty water cannot be touched even. In the same manner, although Brahman resides in all human beings, still there are good men and bad men. Our relation with bad men must not be very close. It is wise to avoid the company of such people.

To the question, "What attitude should we hold when wicked people come to disturb our peace or do actually offend us?", Ramakrishna answered thus: "A person living in society should have a little *tamas* (anger, hence the spirit of resisting evil) for purposes of self-protection. But this is necessary only for outward show, its object being to prevent the wicked from doing harm to you. At the same time you should not do actual injury to another on the ground that he has done injury to you."[1]

Ramakrishna devoted several of his parables to explaining his view of the essence of the principle of "non-resistance to evil by violence". Let us cite one of them.

"There was a large venomous snake in a field. No one dared to go that way. One day a holy man (Mahâtmâ) passed by

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 33-34.

the road and the serpent ran after the sage to bite him. But when the snake approached the holy man, he lost all his ferocity and was overpowered by the gentleness of the Yogi. Seeing him the sage said: 'Well, my friend, think you to bite me?' The snake was abashed and made no reply. At this the sage continued: 'Hearken, friend; do not injure anyone in future.' The snake bowed and nodded assent. The sage went his way, and the snake entered his hole and thenceforward began to live a life of innocence, without attempting to harm anyone. In a few days all the neighbourhood concluded that the snake had lost its venom and was no longer dangerous; so everyone began to tease him. They pelted him with stones or dragged him mercilessly by the tail, and there was no end to his troubles. Fortunately the sage again passed that way, and seeing the bruised and battered condition of the snake was very much moved and inquired the cause. 'Holy sir,' the snake replied, 'this is because I do not injure anyone after your advice. But alas! they are so merciless!' The sage smilingly said: 'My friend, I simply advised you not to bite anyone; but I did not tell you not to frighten others. Although you should not bite any living creature, still you should keep people at a distance by hissing at them.'" And Sri Ramakrishna added: 'There is no harm in "hissing" at wicked men and at your enemies, showing that you can protect yourself and know how to resist evil. Only you must be careful not to pour your venom into the blood of your enemy. Resist not evil by causing evil in return.'"[1]

Ramakrishna said that he placed his teaching at the service of man. He called on his disciples to serve man, seeing God in him. Each individual soul, according to his religious mystical views, is immortal and potentially divine. Seeing God in man meant, in the first place, viewing his soul as part of the absolute spiritual substance, Brahman, whence it once issued and whither it ultimately had to go back to dissolve in, as a drop of rain in the ocean. According to Ramakrishna, the ultimate goal of man's life is to merge with the Absolute, but for that one

[1] *Ibid.*

must free oneself from the pernicious influence of passions, desires, and cares, from everything that connects man with reality. In the words of Ramakrishna, "the non-dualistic Vedântins hold that the Self has no attachment to anything. Pleasure, pain, virtue, vice, can never affect the Self in any way; but they do affect men who think that their soul is the same as the body."[1]

Like many other mystics, Ramakrishna insisted that he could "show by his living example how a truly spiritual man, being dead to the world of senses, can live on the spiritual plane of God-consciousness".[2] Practically that meant that, employing the Yoga methods,[3] he brought himself into the so-called *samadhi* state, the state of mystical ecstasy, in which he spent between three hours and three days and nights.[4] Attainment of *samadhi* was to signify that man was practically capable of freeing his "genuine I" from the chains of the real world, communicating with absolute being (God) and thereby attaining immortality.

In their descriptions of Ramakrishna's teaching bourgeois historians of philosophy, as a rule, emphasise one-sidedly its religious mystical aspects, artificially oversimplifying his views.

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[1] *Ibid.*, p. 148.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 15.

[3] For details of the Yoga methods see the chapter on the philosophical views of Vivekananda.

[4] In the words of eyewitnesses, "in his samadhi his body would become absolutely motionless, his pulse and heart-beat imperceptible, his eyes would be half-open and if anyone pressed his eyeballs with fingers his body would not move or show the least sign of sensation. He would remain in this state sometimes for a few minutes, sometimes for half an hour or an hour, and on one occasion he continued it for three days and nights" (*Memoirs of Ramakrishna, op. cit.*, p. 12).

In actual fact, however, Ramakrishna's world-view is very complex, and some of his propositions may at first sight appear to be mutually exclusive. In some of the parables he advocates escape from reality, while in others, calls on his audience to be closer to the practical interests of men; on one occasion he offers the advice of giving oneself up entirely to God, while on another, warns against excessive enthusiasm for religious cults, etc.

Actually, there is no contradiction here at all. Inasmuch as this world as manifestation of the divine substance is, in Ramakrishna's words, the residence of individual human souls, while liberation of the soul depends on the propriety of its behaviour in this world (the law of *Karma*), man is obliged to carry on the worldly affairs conscientiously, far from evading them. There must be moderation in everything: it is just as sinful to be carried away by the worldly affairs as to pray to God and forget one's everyday duties.

From these positions he criticised the adherents of spiritualism and theosophy. Speaking of theosophists, he said that "those who seek for powers ... belong to an inferior class, such powers, for example, as the power of getting across the Ganges without any help or the power of reporting here what a person is talking about in a far-off country, and other psychic powers".[1]

Returning to this subject on a different occasion, Ramakrishna gave an answer in the form of a parable. By spending fourteen years practising severe asceticism in a thick forest, a certain person acquired the ability to walk on water. Rejoicing in this, he went to his teacher and told him of his great feat. The teacher answered: "You poor thing, what you attained by fourteen years of constant strain, is attained by common people who give small coins to a boatman."

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[1] *Ibid.*, p. 324.

Thus the goals and tasks of the religious reformist movement started by Ramakrishna were, in broad outline, as follows:

— postulating as an eternal truth the idea that God is one but has many aspects, and that each religion is merely one of the aspects of worshipping one and the same God;

— proceeding on this monotheistic idea, eliminating the contradictions (establishing harmony) between the various faiths and doctrines of different sects;

— proving that each individual soul is immortal and potentially divine, and preaching equality of all men on that basis;

— proving that "this world" is real, by developing the objective-idealist philosophy of the Vedanta under the new historical conditions;

— promoting in every way the growth and enrichment of man's life in this world, gradually getting rid of the superstitions, religious strife, sectarian bigotry, theosophy, and other imperfections and errors;

— resisting the Indian people's external and internal enemies, "hissing" at the enemies but avoiding fighting evil by causing evil in return.

Ramakrishna's worldview reflected the passive form of protest of the liberal circles of the Indian public against the oppression of the British colonialists.

Chapter 4. VIVEKANANDA

Vivekananda (Narendranath Dutt) (1862-1902) wrote one of the most brilliant pages in the history of Indian philosophical and social thought of the new times. His worldview embodied the most essential features of bourgeois ideology of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, exerting enormous influence on its further development.

Vivekananda came from a rich, educated, and free-thinking family; he began studying philosophical literature at a very early age. Biographers write that he was profoundly impressed by John Stuart Mill's *Three Essays on Religion*. He studied the works of Descartes, Spinoza, Hume, Kant, Fichte, Hegel, Schopenhauer, Comte, and Darwin.

Vivekananda believed himself to be a disciple and follower of Ramakrishna. He wrote: "I met Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, with whom I lived for a long time, and under whom I studied..."[1] "All that I am ... is owing to my Master, Sri Ramakrishna"....[2]

In 1884, Vivekananda's family was ruined. Later the philosopher remembered that he was nearly starving. Barefooted, he went from office to office,

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[1] *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, Almora, Himalayas, 1924, Vol. V, p. 150. Further references to this edition are given as follows: Vivekananda, *The Complete Works* ..., Vol. ..., p. ... .

[2] *Ibid*., p. 328.

and was rejected everywhere. He learnt from experience what human sympathy meant. That was his first contacts with real life. He discovered that it had no place for the weak, the poor, and the abandoned.

Vivekananda began his philosophical and socio-political activities in the 1880s. That was a time of growing friction between the Indian people and the British colonialists. Assessing the situation in India, Marx wrote in a letter to Danielson on February 19, 1881: "In *India* serious complications, if not a general outbreak, are in store for the British government."[1]

Vivekananda had no clear idea of the nature and motive forces of the growing national liberation movement, but he nevertheless prepared to take an active part in it. Datta even asserts that Vivekananda wanted to found a revolutionary party. Judging by certain indirect data, it was not a question of a mass organisation but a small group of patriots endeavouring to head the national liberation movement.

Vivekananda closely followed the development of social affairs in Europe, he was personally acquainted with some revolutionaries and studied their works. Criticising the false bourgeois democracy in the West, Vivekananda wrote: "They that have money, have kept the government of the land under their thumb, are robbing and drying up all the sap out of the people, and sending them as soldiers to fight and be slain on foreign shores, so that in case of victory, their coffers may be full of gold bought by the blood of the subject-people on the

[1] "Marx to Nikolai Frantsevich Danielson in St. Petersburg", in: K. Marx, F. Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, p. 317.

field of battle. And the subject-people?— well, theirs is only to shed their blood."[1]

Raising his voice against colonial and feudal oppression, Vivekananda searched at the same time for an answer to the question of India's historical destinies, of the ways and means of transforming it into a wealthy, strong and independent state. He believed that the principal builders of future India are the people, that is, in his view, the peasant masses comprising the absolute majority of the country's population.

Vivekananda's worldview reflected the strength and weakness, complexity and contradictoriness of Indian bourgeois ideology of the times. His sincere sympathy with the masses went hand in hand with failure to grasp their true interests; the desire to be close to the people, with fear of the people; the wish to free the country from the colonialists, with naive belief in their good will; idealism and metaphysics, with elements of materialism and dialectics; and profound religiosity, with atheist utterances.

1. Vivekananda's Basic Philosophical Positions

Guided by the desire to re-orientate the Vedanta philosophy to make it the theoretical foundation of the struggle for building a New India, Vivekananda paid considerable attention to the question of philosophical heritage as a whole. His works (*On the Vedanta Philosophy, The Vedanta in All Its Phases, The Vedanta Philosophy and Christianity*, and others) contain a critique of the traditional Vedantist interpretation of the basic philosophical prob-

[1] Vivekananda, *The Complete Works*, Vol. V , pp. 364-365.

lems, starting from the Vedic period and ending with his own times.

Vivekananda puts a broad construction on the concept of the Vedanta philosophy. He wrote that the Vedanta is a kind of philosophical algebra, for to a certain extent it covers, in fact, all of India's philosophical trends, both orthodox and unorthodox; the word "Vedanta" itself can sometimes be used as a synonym of Hinduism. "Thus the Vedanta, whether we know it or not, has penetrated all the sects in India, and what we call Hinduism ... has been throughout interpreted by the influence of the Vedanta. Whether we are conscious of it or not, we think the Vedanta, we live in the Vedanta, we breathe the Vedanta, and we die in the Vedanta, and every Hindu does that...".[1]

Regarding the Vedantist philosophical heritage as a single whole, Vivekananda set himself the task of singling out the most valuable and progressive elements in it, creating on this basis a new Vedanta. He wrote: "This is my attempt, my mission in life, to show that the Vedantic Schools are not contradictory, that they all necessitate each other, all fulfil each other, and one, as it were, is the stepping-stone to the other."[2]

Vivekananda divided all contemporary Vedantist trends into two large groups, *dvaita* (the dualist Vedanta) and *advaita* (the non-dualist Vedanta). The first group is represented by the philosophy of Ramanuja (12th century), the second, by the philosophy of Samkara (8th century).

Ramanuja was the greatest of all dualist philosophers. All dualists of later periods in the history

[1] Vivekananda, *The Complete Works*, Vol. III, p. 324.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 323.

of India continued, directly or indirectly, to develop his ideas. In the south of India, dualism was represented by such an outstanding philosopher as Madhava,[1] and in Bengal, by Chaitanya.

It should be noted that the term dualism is given an extremely original interpretation by Vivekananda, one that is basically different from the European. In the latter, dualism denotes a philosophical doctrine which believes two opposite substances, material and spiritual, irreducible to each other, to be the source of all being, while for Vivekananda dualism means recognising the existence of two worlds, the other world (the world of essence, Brahman — Atman) and this world (the world of phenomena, the universe, nature).

Vivekananda believed the division of all philosophers into materialists and idealists depending on their choice of the primary principle to be devoid of any meaning, for both matter and spirit are phenomena of this world. Matter and spirit are both nature (matter), only the former is crude and the latter, fine. "One party says, thought is caused by matter, and the other says, matter is caused by thought. Both statements are wrong; matter and thought are co-existent. There is a third something [Brahman — Atman — *V.B.*], of which both matter and thought are products."[2]

[1] In the south, there were other dualist trends or sects, the so-called *shaivas*. In most regions of India, *shaivas* believed themselves to be the followers of *advaita*, with the exception of southern India and Ceylon. However, the latter, too, merely substituted Vishnu for Shiva, but for the rest followed the teaching of Ramanuja, except for the doctrine of the soul. Ramanuja's followers held that the soul was a kind of minute particle (*anu*), while Samkara's followers viewed it as something omnipresent (*vibhu*).

[2] Vivekananda, *The Complete Works*, Vol. V, p. 323.

In Vivekananda's words, "the external and internal natures are not two different things; they are really one. Nature is the sumtotal of all phenomena. 'Nature' means all that is, all that moves. We make a tremendous distinction between matter and mind. Actually, they are but one nature, half of which is continually acting on the other half. Matter is pressing upon the mind in the form of various sensations. These sensations are nothing but force."[1] The force from the outside (the things, objects, phenomena) evokes the force within (sensations, perceptions, concepts). "From the will to respond to or get away from the outer force, the inner force becomes what we call thought. Both matter and mind are really nothing but forces; and if you analyse them far enough you will find that at root they are one,"[2] Vivekananda believes.

"The very fact that the external force can somehow evoke the internal force shows that somewhere they join each other — they must be continuous and therefore basically the same force. ...Since the same force appears in one form as matter and in another form as mind, there is no reason to think matter and mind are different. Mind is changed into matter, matter is changed into mind."[3] "Thought force [the philosopher says] becomes nerve force, muscular force; muscular and nervous force becomes thought force. Nature is all this force, whether expressed as matter or mind. The difference between the subtlest mind and the grossest matter is only one of degree. Therefore the whole universe may be called either mind or mat-

[1] Vivekananda, *The Complete Works,* Vol. VIII, p. 245.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 245-246.
[3] Vivekananda, *The Complete Works,* Vol. VIII, p. 246.

ter, it does not matter which. You may call the mind refined matter or the body concretised mind; it makes little difference by which name you call which."[1]

Thus nature is homogeneous. Differentiation is only in manifestation. The Sanskrit word *prakrti* used by the Vedantists to denote nature, literally means differentiation. The fact that mind becomes matter and matter in its turn becomes mind, "is simply a question of vibration".

To substantiate this point, Vivekananda considers the following example: "If I do not eat for ten days I cannot think. Only a few stray thoughts are in my mind. I am very weak and perhaps do not know my own name. Then I eat some bread, and in a little while I begin to think, my power of mind has returned. The bread has become mind. Similarly, the mind lessens its rate of vibrations and manifests itself in the body, becomes matter."[2]

Developing his erroneous view that mind and matter are homogeneous, Vivekananda arrives at the naïve opinion, stemming from a failure to grasp the socio-historical development of society, that the struggle between materialism and idealism is a result of misunderstanding. All the troubles arising from the conflict between materialism and idealism should, in his view, be attributed to "incorrect reasoning", for in actual fact there is no dif-

[1] *Ibid.*
[2] Vivekananda, *The Complete Works,* Vol. VI, p. 32. Vivekananda also cites a purely physical example: "Take two different substances, say a piece of glass and a piece of wood, grind them up together fine enough, reduce them till there is nothing more to reduce, and the substance remaining appears homogeneous. All substances in the last analysis are one. Homogeneity is the substance, the reality" (*Ibid.*, Vol. VI, pp. 91-92).

ference between them. The desire of the dualist Vivekananda to eliminate the fundamental question of philosophy, to rise above materialism and idealism, makes one wonder if it was not a tribute to the philosophical fashions of the day. It is a well-known fact that late in the 19th and early in the 20th century philosophers and natural scientists in many countries of the world entertained the idea of creating a new or third line in philosophy, which allegedly sublates the one-sidedness of materialism and idealism. There are grounds to believe that the Indian dualist was affected by this fashion.

But while in Europe and America the idea of a "third line" in philosophy (preached mostly by Machists) was a reactionary phenomenon in all respects, one by which the most obscurantist idealists profited, among Indian Vedantists this phenomenon objectively signified a considerable concession to materialism.

The point is that traditionally the Vedantists believed this world to be "unreal", illusory, rejecting also the right of a "true doctrine" of it to exist. Vivekananda was probably the first philosopher in the history of Vedantism to speak so openly and definitely in defence of the reality of this world. All religions, he wrote, teach "that this world is nothing. Beyond this world is something which is very real. Here comes the difficulty..." If this world is a means towards attaining the next, how can this world be "nothing"? This world is "the great gymnasium". "To believe that mind is all, that thought is all, is only a higher materialism." "I am a materialist in a certain sense [said Vivekananda], because I believe that there is only One. That is what the materialist wants you to believe, only he calls it matter, and I call it God. The mate-

rialists admit that out of this matter, all hope, and religion, and everything have come. I say, all these have come out of Brahman."[1]

Thus we see that the real basic philosophical position of the dualist Vivekananda is that of objective idealism.

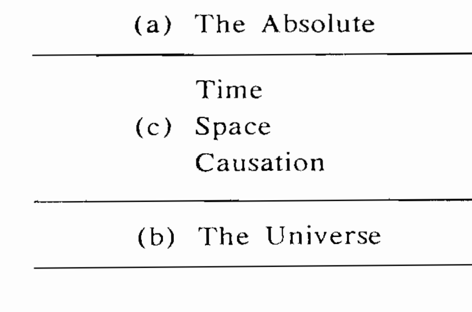
2. Brahman and Nature

Brahman is the Absolute, eternal, motionless, without qualities, infinite, amorphous.

Brahman is at the same time the cause of the universe (nature); in the objects and phenomena of nature it becomes relative, transient, moving, finite, and having form.

This metaphysical gap between Brahman and the universe, allowed by Vedantists, naturally causes insurmountable difficulties in explaining the relations between them. Vivekananda recognises that, too. He writes: "The one question that is most difficult to grasp in understanding the Advaita philosophy, and the one question that will be asked again and again and that will always remain is, how has the Infinite, the Absolute, become the finite?"[2]

Here Vivekananda resorts to a diagram.



[1] *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 138.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 130.

The concept of the universe, he explains, includes not only the material world but also the mental (spiritual) one, heavens and earth and everything that exists here. Mind is the name of a change, and body the name of another change, and so on, and all these changes compose our universe.

This Absolute (a) has become the universe (b) by coming through time, space, and causation (c). This is the central idea of the Vedanta. "Time, space, and causation are like the glass through which the Absolute is seen, and when it is seen on the lower side it appears as the universe."[1]

Vivekananda links up the existence of time with obligatory presence of mind and thought,[2] the existence of space, with the presence of "external changes" in the universe. "What you call motion and causation cannot exist where there is only One". In other words, within the Absolute that is undifferentiated (One), there can be no causal links. Such links are only possible "after, if we may be permitted to say so, the degeneration of the Absolute into the phenomenal, and not before; ... our will, our desire, and all these things always come *after* that."[3]

Vivekananda sharply criticises Schopenhauer for failure to understand the Vedanta philosophy on a decisive point. Schopenhauer regarded all things as manifestations of will which allegedly exists by itself, being the spiritual basis of all that is. In other words, he put will in place of the Absolute.

[1] Vivekananda, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 130.

[2] That does not mean that Vivekananda regards time as an a priori form of sensual contemplation, as Kant does. For Vedantists, time and mind (thought) are equally objective.

[3] Vivekananda, *Op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 130-131.

But, Vivekananda objects, "the Absolute cannot be presented as will, for will is something changeable and phenomenal". There can be neither time nor space nor again cause-and-effect links in Brahman (the Absolute), for it is One. But that which exists by itself as One, cannot have any cause.

But in what way does the Absolute cease to be the Absolute, degenerating into the phenomenal world, into nature? There can be no answer to this question, says Vivekananda. The Absolute is the Absolute. In expressing some idea of the Absolute, we thereby restrict it, so that it ceases to be the Absolute. Anything that is expressed by reason has its limits, i. e., is finite. In this sense, "a God known is no more God: He has become finite like one of us".

In other words, Vivekananda does not depart here from the traditional Vedanta: it is impossible to know Brahman by reason, it is only possible to merge with it in one's soul, freeing oneself first from the fetters of the material world. Its "degenerating" actions as the Absolute are inexpressible in the categories of reason.

3. Nature and Man

All Vedantists agree on three points: they believe in God; they believe in the Vedas as revelation; they believe in cycles as the mainline of the development of all that is.

The gist of the doctrine of cycles is as follows. All that exists in the universe is the result of the manifestation of primary matter called *akasha*. All forces acting in the universe, whether they be vital forces or the forces of gravitation, attraction or repulsion, are the result of the action

of the primary force called *prana*. Acting on the amorphous *akasha*, *prana* projects or constructs the multifarious universe (nature).

At the beginning of the cycle *akasha* is immobile and does not manifest itself in any way. Then *prana* starts to act with a growing force, creating forms (plants, animals, men, stars, etc.) of increasing content and magnitude. Through a lengthy process (lasting millions of years) this evolution attains its climax, after which the process of involution or decline begins. The objects and phenomena of nature gradually assume increasingly finer forms and finally revert to their original (primary) state, *akasha* and *prana*.

Apart from *akasha* and *prana*, there also exists cosmic reason or *mahat*. Vivekananda holds that *akasha* and *prana* do not create *mahat*, but they may be incorporated into it. In its turn, *mahat* does not create *akasha* or *prana* but is transformed into them.

It is interesting in this connection to consider Aristotle's doctrine of matter, nature, and form. According to the ancient Greek philosopher, matter is not the concrete objects and phenomena of nature but rather the substratum or basis of which they are formed. Matter is devoid of any definiteness, it is not being or reality but only a potentiality. Matter becomes reality when it is "formed", that is, becomes a thing through the activity of form.

Matter is the passive principle, while form is active and creative.

It is easy to see that Vivekananda's category of *akasha* is equivalent to Aristotelian matter, while *prana* is the analogue of the category of form. Aristotle criticised Plato for placing the essence

of things outside the things themselves, in the so-called "ideas", and constructed a theory which places essence in the things themselves. Aristotle believed that any phenomenon of nature has four causes:

the material cause (*causa materialis*), or matter;
the formal cause (*causa formalis*), or form;
the efficient cause (*causa sui*);
the final cause (*causa finalis*), or goal.

Aristotle illustrated his theory with the following example:

causa materialis: the building materials for the construction of the house;
cause formalis: the plans for building the house;
causa sui: the architect and his art;
causa finalis: the finished building.

As we see, in Vivekananda's theory, the role of the *causa sui* is played by *mahat* (cosmic reason). At the same time we should emphasise a very essential difference in the categories here compared. Aristotle's form signifies the action of divine force ("God is the form of forms"), while Vivekananda's *prana* and *mahat* are astral or cosmic forces.

Now, in what way did *akasha*, *prana*, and *mahat* emerge from Brahman? This is a question which Vivekananda, just as all Vedantists, refuses to answer. It is assumed that nature as a whole is bound by the law of causality and is in time and space. At the same time Vivekananda decisively rejects the view (the metaphysical one, we would say) according to which space, time, and causality should be regarded as separate, independent and isolated essences existing outside the objects and phenomena of the material world. "We cannot see anything outside the space [he writes], yet we do not know space. We cannot

perceive anything outside of time, yet we do not know time. We cannot understand anything except in terms of causality, yet we do not know what causation is. These three things — time, space and causality are in and through every phenomenon, but they are not phenomena. They are as it were the forms or moulds in which everything must be cast before it can be apprehended. Matter is substance plus time, space and causation."[1]

In other words, space, time, and cause-and-effect links should be viewed as the conditions of being of the concrete objects or phenomena of the moving universe (nature). Let us note that this position is in direct contradiction with that of subjective idealism, which regards space, time and cause-and-effect links as created by human consciousness, existing in this consciousness and perception, and devoid of the quality of objectiveness. Thus for Mach space and time are ordered systems of series of perceptions. Lenin wrote about this view of Mach: "According to Mach, it is not man with his sensations that exists in space and time, but space and time that exist in man, that depend upon man and are generated by man."[2]

In considering the question of correlation of essence (*akasha*) and phenomenon (nature), Vivekananda comes to the conclusion that from the epistemological viewpoint any object or phenomenon of nature is substance plus name and form. Name and form come and go, but substance remains the same. Thus, substance, name and

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[1] Vivekananda, *The Complete Works*, Vol. III, p. 247.
[2] V. I. Lenin, "Materialism and Empirio-Criticism", *Collected Works*, Vol. 14, p. 177.

form make this pitcher. When it is broken you do not call it pitcher any more; its name and form vanish but its substance remains.

All the differentiation in substance is made by name and form. These are not real, because they vanish. All of nature is not real, is not substantial in this sense, for only that which is unchanging and indestructible is real and substantial.

Nature is Maya, which means the form of all that is, of the infinite quantity of qualities. Maya is not real, for if it were real, we could not destroy or change it. Using Kant's terminology, Vivekananda explains that Maya is phenomenon, the substance is noumenon, and that "everything existing has two aspects. One is noumenal, unchanging and indestructible; the other is phenomenal, changing and destructible".[1] It should be noted that resorting to Kantian categories obscures rather than clarifies the essence of the problem here. What Kant and Vivekananda have in common is that both of them permit a metaphysical gap to appear between essence and phenomenon. However, their philosophical positions are fundamentally different: Vivekananda's objective idealism is opposed to Kant's subjectivism. For instance, the Kantian phenomenal world is the world of the subject's sensations and experiences, whereas for Vivekananda, Maya (or the Maya world) is a projection of the objectively existing *akasha*. The subject's sensations and experiences are objectively determined by the nature of things itself, the criterion of truth being somewhere outside the subject. Maya signifies recognition of the phenomena of the material world as they are, that is,

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[1] Vivekananda, *The Complete* Works, Vol. VIII, p. 247.

recognition of the fact that the very basis of our existence is contradictory, that development everywhere proceeds through profound contradictions, that where there is good, there must also be evil, and vice versa, where there is evil, there must also be good, where there is life, death must follow it like a shadow; everyone who is joyous will have to feel sad, and where there is grief there must also be joy. People sometimes think that conditions may be created on earth where there will only be good and no evil, where we shall always be joyful and never sad. But that is impossible in the very nature of things.

The universe moves in cycles of wave forms. It rises, reaches its zenith, then falls and remains in the hollow, as it were, for some time, that is, in the simplest, most elementary state, once more to rise, and so on.

That which is true of nature as a whole is also true of its parts. Human organisations are part of nature. Consequently, the history of human society is also subject to the objective law of cyclic development. "The history of nations is like that [writes Vivekananda]: they rise and they fall; after the rise comes a fall, again out of the fall comes a rise, with greater power. This motion is always going on. In the religious world the same movement exists. In every nation's spiritual life, there is a fall, as well as a rise."[1]

The individual man also goes through cycles,

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[1] *Ibid.*, Vol. IV, p. 116. Vivekananda considers the details of rises and falls in the sphere of the spirit drawing his examples from Buddhism and Christianity (see his lecture "The Great Teachers of the World" delivered at the Shakespeare Club, Pasadena, California, February 3, 1900; Vivekananda, *The Complete Works*, Vol. IV, pp. 116-130).

along with nature and society. The problem of the individuality is probably the most important one in the entire philosophy of the Vedanta. Vivekananda is no exception in this sense. "The individuality [he wrote] is my password, I seek to form individuals."[1]

According to the teaching of the Vedantists, Vivekananda included, man is an organic mixture of the materials of the universe, it is a synthesis of the universe, or the universe on a small scale. They assert that man contains the physical matter of the mineral kingdom, the vital force of the vegetable kingdom, the animal's ability to feel and desire, the simple intellect corresponding to the higher animals now extinct, and the soul which alone makes the true man. The soul constitutes man's essence; it is immortal. Birth and death should be regarded from this viewpoint as changes in matter rather than as changes in ourselves.

In his work *The Nature of the Soul and Its Goal* Vivekananda wrote: "The earliest idea is that a man, when he dies, is not annihilated. Something lives and goes on living even after the man is dead."[2] Vedantist Brahmana Chatterjee, Vivekananda's contemporary, insisted that death did not produce any changes in man's real personality. Man remains just as alive as he was, he merely cannot communicate with us having lost the physical interpreter. He exists in a finer form inaccessible to the perceptions of man living in the physical environment. Nevertheless this form is just as real as the light waves in the

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[1] R. Rolland, *La vie de Vivekananda et l'Evangile Universel*, Part I, *Op. cit.*, p. 92.

[2] Vivekananda, *The Complete Works*, Vol. VI, p. 16.

infrared and ultraviolet ranges of the solar spectrum, although they are invisible to our bodily vision. It follows that those whom we call dead men, live, they exist, but only as conductors of much finer vibrations... Our whole life on the other side is no more than a continuation and development of our earthly life.

The cycles of reincarnations through which a soul goes — departure for the other side and return to earthly life, another departure and another return, etc.[1] — culminate finally in the so-called release, which means that the individual soul has attained through an enormous number of reincarnations such a degree of purity that during the current departure for the other side it fully merges with Brahman becoming identical with it.

The idea of duality of man is not new. We encounter it in ancient Egypt and Babylonia. According to the ancient Egyptians, man's body houses another body which moves and acts within it. When the external body dies, the double gets out and lives for a while, but his life depends on the degree of preservation of the external body. That is why ancient Egyptians took such great care to preserve the corpses (embalming, building the pyramids, etc.). It was believed in ancient Egypt and Babylonia that the double could not live eternally, but only, at best, during that time in which the external body was preserved.

Ancient Indians held a different view. They also recognised the existence of a double in man, but in their view that double was a spiritual body or the soul which did not depend on the material body as the ancient Egyptians believed.

[1] A process called *samsara* in Sanskrit.

On the contrary, in leaving the body, the soul throws off the fetters, as it were. That is why Indians have the ancient custom of burning corpses rather than preserving them through embalming or building pyramids for them.

These views of the nature of the body and soul, as well as of interconnections between them, recorded already in the Upanisads, were assimilated and developed by the Vedantist philosophers. Vivekananda believed that the whole of the material nature, including man's body, plays a most significant, though not the principal, role in his life. The philosopher gave this answer to the question of how the infinite (the soul) can live in finite space (in the body): when man holds a book in his hand and reads it, he turns one leaf after another. Nature is the book which the soul reads. Each life is one page in a book, so to speak. Having read that book, the soul becomes perfect.

As distinct from Christians, Vedantists believe that the problem does not lie in the soul reaching the heaven but in stopping the soul's departures for the heaven, that is, stopping the cycle of reincarnations, of deaths and births.

It is the belief of the Hindu that the soul is neither mind nor body, says Vivekananda. The body is always changing, and the mind is subject to even greater changes — it never has the same thoughts for even a few minutes. "Behind the body, behind the mind, there must be something, viz., the soul, which unifies the man. Mind is merely the fine instrument through which the soul — the master — acts on the body. In India we say a man has given up his body while you [Christians — *V. B.*] say a man gives up his

ghost. The Hindus believe that a man is a soul and has a body, while Western people believe he is a body and possesses a soul. Death overtakes everything that is complex. The soul is a single element, not composed of anything else, and therefore it cannot die. By its very nature the soul must be immortal."[1]

Vivekananda believes nature (the universe) to be subject to a universal objective law whose action affects the body, the mind, the soul, all that is. Everything in nature is absolutely determined and law-governed. How does man form the concept of law? Observing the objects and phenomena of nature, says Vivekananda, men have noticed that that which happened in the past was later repeated again and again. In the course of time men came to the conclusion that nature is uniform while repetition is constant and universal. Moreover, if there were no uniformity and repetition in nature, the phenomena of nature could not be understood.

To know a law, one has to study an enormous number, mountains of various phenomena, one has to study the interrelations between them, for the law is never separate from the phenomena. Any other way to knowing the law is a false one. "We get our knowledge of law from the massing and welding of changes that occur. We never see law beyond these changes. The idea of law as something separate from phenomena is a mental abstraction, a convenient use of words and nothing more."[2]

[1] Vivekananda, *The Complete Works*, Vol. III, pp. 235-236.
[2] Vivekananda, *Op. cit.*, Vol. V, p. 333.

Here, just as in considering other problems concerning nature, Vivekananda seems to forget his basic objective idealist premises, expressing materialistic and dialectical ideas. For him, law is not an idea or abstraction but an actual expression of real, recurring, stable, and essential links between the phenomena of nature. All nature develops according to laws, manifesting itself through laws and acting according to them. A law cannot be abolished or annihilated. "If you could break a law of nature, all nature would come to an end in an instant. There would be no more nature."[1]

Laws of nature, Vivekananda remarks, should be distinguished from legal, ethical, "national" or in general social ones, which are created by man's reason and will and pertain to the sphere of subjective constructions. "The national laws at best are embodied will of a majority of the nation,"[2] whereas in actual fact they embody the will of a small group of the state's rulers pursuing their own self-seeking goals. It is precisely because the national laws are subjective and do not express the will of the majority of the people that they "are honoured more in the breach than in the observance. If they were laws how could they be broken?" In other words, social (legal, ethical, etc.) laws are not laws in the proper sense if only because they can be violated, that is, they do not possess the features of universality and obligatoriness.

We see that Vivekananda identifies ethical and legal laws with those of social development,

[1] Vivekananda, *Op. cit.*, Vol. VI, pp. 55-56.
[2] Vivekananda, *Op. cit.*, Vol. V, p. 335.

thereby asserting his idealist view of history and the phenomena and processes of social life. It should be borne in mind, however, that Vivekananda was not familiar with historical materialism, he was unaware of the existence of the objective laws of social development. He did not know that primary and determining for the complex social relations are material production relations which correspond to a definite stage in the development of their material productive forces. "The mode of production of material life conditions the general process of social, political and intellectual life. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their social existence that determines their consciousness."[1]

At the same time Vivekananda guessed, in his own idealist manner, that there are elements of objective content in men's life and activity. The point is that each one of our acts, however insignificant it may be, involves a certain range of objects and phenomena of objective nature. "Law itself is the operation of cause and effect. Certain things happen according to certain other things which have gone before. Every precedent has its consequent. Thus it is in nature."[2]

According to Vivekananda, in the course of history man observed and studied for a long time the phenomena of nature, gradually shifting his attention to "internal phenomena", that is, to his internal world involving the activity of the mind. Man gradually established that his personal

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[1] Karl Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1977, pp. 20-21.

[2] Vivekananda, *The Complete Works*, Vol. VI, p. 31.

(inner) life was ultimately subject to the same universal law as all nature. In other words, the inner phenomena, that is, man's life and reason, are subject to law in the same way as the outer ones.

It is due to these circumstances, Vivekananda asserts, that man formulated the law of *karma* determining the functioning of the human mind. Men believe that at each given moment they are masters of their activity. But when they look back at their past lives, and in particular remember their failures and the consequences of the latter, they often find it inconceivable that they should have done this and failed to have done that, and the matter comes to appear as if their steps had been guided by some external force. That force is *karma*. The category of *karma* contains the ideas of the conditions of the emergence and passing on inherited properties of any natural self-developing system, that is, not only of an individual biological organism (man or animal) but also of a social group (tribe, people, *varna*, caste, etc.). *Karma* also means the result of an action or some work. Thus both the act and result of pot-making are *karma*. *Karma* is inherited, that is, it enters the body and becomes the *karma* of the son, the grandson, etc. Supposing a pot-maker was a poor workman and made ugly and fragile jugs. He will in this case suffer inconveniences in his life due to his poor work. These inconveniences will not necessarily be due to the fact that he will become the owner of a badly made jug, but he may, for instance, have to wear bad clothes or have to put up with other inconveniences; retribution is inevitable. The son of a poor pot-maker will inherit the *karma* of a poor

workman and will have to pay for it, that is, he will have to put up with certain inconveniences in his life.

The theory of *karma* takes into account social relations and social labour. It is probable that the pot-maker was not wholly to blame for the quality of his jugs, for some other people got him his materials, still others provided the necessary instruments, etc. Our *karmas* are thus collective. The products (results) of the entire social labour are *karmas*. It follows that different communities of men (peoples, *varnas*, castes) have different *karmas*.

Varying in the degree of individual force and social significance, *karmas* come into contradictions and conflicts with one another, so that some of them are extinguished while others rise. For this reason inherited *karmas* sometimes have no great significance in a person's destiny.

However, recognising *karma*, man need not be a fatalist, that is, he need not think that he is completely powerless before the objective law, dooming himself to passivity. The point is, says Vivekananda, that according to the law of *karma* each action sooner or later causes a certain effect. An action cannot disappear without causing some other action. Thus if our actions, on the plane of our existence, can cause only those consequences that correspond to them, it follows that we must find the strength to direct the cycle of causes and consequences. That is, properly speaking, the essence of the doctrine of reincarnation.

Adhering to the positions of mechanistic determinism, Vivekananda decisively rejected the objective character of chance: chance is a particular case of necessity. Under absolute necessity,

he says, there can be no freedom. "I disagree with the idea that freedom is obedience to the laws of nature. I do not understand what it means."[1]

Freedom, as Vivekananda understands it, is something that was not caused by some factor. However, since there are no causeless phenomena in nature, there can be no freedom in it either. From this standpoint there can be no freedom of will either, for any will is causally conditioned. "Everything that I do or think or feel, every part of my conduct or behaviour, my every movement—all is caused and therefore not free... There is no such thing as freedom of the mind, it cannot be."[2]

Vivekananda thus believes that freedom (in his understanding) is only possible in the hereafter, in the world of the Absolute, of Brahman. As for nature, it merely wants to be free, it continually, eternally strives after freedom. Freedom in this view is the motive force and ultimate goal of the development of nature. The laws of nature are modes by which all that is strives to attain its freedom.

This universal struggle for freedom achieves its highest expression in man, in his conscious desire to be free. But the Vedantist, as we know, takes man to mean the soul, the substantial spirit. According to him, the soul is never changed and neither is it destroyed, although it manifests itself in nature assuming a definite form and name. Form and name continually change and are destroyed. "Yet [Vivekananda observes sarcastically] men foolishly seek immortality in this changeable aspect, in the body and mind — they want to have an eternal body."[3]

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[1] Vivekananda, *Op. cit.*, Vol. V, p. 214.

[2] Vivekananda, *Op. cit.*, Vol. VIII, p. 245.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 247-248.

What is the relation between man and nature? Insofar as nature is Maya whose content is continual changeability and, consequently, illusoriness, man (the soul) is not part of nature, for the soul (man) is free, immortal, immutable, and infinite. The question of whether man has freedom of will or not does not arise. The point is that man (the soul) exists beyond any will at all. "Wherever there is will [Vivekananda believes] it is never free. There is no freedom of will whatever. There is freedom of that which becomes will when name and form get hold of it, making it their slave."[1] In other words, when the soul has become the will (or acquires the will), it is no more really free. Nature pulls the strings, and it has to dance as nature wants it to. "Thus have you and I danced throughout the years. All the things that we see, do, feel, know, all our thoughts and actions, are nothing but dancing to the dictates of nature. There has been and there is no freedom in any of this."[2]

Everything in nature, from the lowest to the highest, from the finest to the crudest, from abstract thought to practical action, is determined and directed by law. But none of this, in Vivekananda's words, pertains to our real self, none of it can change its essence, for the true self is beyond all law. At the same time, man sets himself the goal of freeing himself from the bondage of nature. "When he is free, nature becomes his slave."

From these positions Vivekananda formulates the content and meaning of man's life at the time when he is nature's slave. He writes: "The awakening of the soul to its bondage and its efforts to stand up and assert itself—this is called life."[3] Success in this

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 248.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] Vivekananda, *The Complete Works*, Vol. VIII, p. 249.

struggle is called evolution. The eventual triumph, when all the slavery is blown away, is called "salvation, nirvana, freedom."

Thus the ultimate goal of each individual as well as of all men taken together is reuniting with Brahman, with God, the so-called release.

While the goal is the same, the methods of attaining it, depending on man's nature and temperament, may vary considerably. But the Vedantists do not recognise any methods other than Yoga.

Of the numerous Yogas, the adherents of Vedantism have worked out in greatest theoretical detail and have applied practically on the widest scale the following four: Karma-Yoga, Bhakti-Yoga, Jnana-Yoga, and Raja-Yoga.

4. Karma-Yoga

Karma-Yoga is the method of release through work, practice, activity.[1] What is meant here is that the earthly life determines all subsequent life, that is, as you sow in this world you will mow in the next. *Karma* compels all men to be active, to work industriously for the good of society and, of course, for their own good.

Vivekananda endeavoured to lend great civic spirit to the Karma-Yoga doctrine of work. Doing one's civic duty, working for the common good, sacrificing one's personal interest is, in his words, not less important than believing in God or studying philosophy. "Although a man has not studied a single system of philosophy, although he does not believe in any God, and never has believed, although he has not prayed

[1] The word *karma* is derived from the Sanskrit *kri*, "to do', "to act'. This word is also used in Karma-Yoga in the sense of work and the results caused by our actions.

even once in his whole life, if the simple power of good actions has brought him to that state where he is ready to give up his life and all else for others, he has arrived at the same point to which the religious man will come through his prayers and the philosopher through his knowledge."[1]

In the Yogin's view, *karma* covers all phenomena of the material and spiritual world and manifests itself in this sense as a universal law. In other words, all that we see, feel, and do, all that takes place in the universe is, on the one hand, the result of past actions, and itself becomes the cause of certain effects on the other. Hence the conclusion: "We are responsible for what we are; and whatever we wish ourselves to be, we have the power to make ourselves."[2]

Karma-Yogis accept the proposition of the *Samkhya* philosophy that nature is composed of three forces: *rajas* (activity), *tamas* (inertia), and *sattva* (equilibrium). According to their views, in every man there are these three forces. Depending on the circumstances, now one, now some other of these forces is shifted into the foreground. When tamas prevails, man becomes lazy. On other occasions activity predominates, and on still others, the calm balancing of both. "Karma-Yoga has specially to deal with these three factors."

Endeavouring to make the doctrine of Karma-Yoga meet the needs of his time, Vivekananda offered a new interpretation of its basic propositions. Thus in speaking of the factors which function in man's nature, he objects to the tyranny of extremes, particularly of the *tamas* force which in his words gives

[1] Vivekananda, *The Complete Works*, Vol. I, p. 84.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 29.

rise to inertia among the people and to non-resistance to evil.

Rejecting the theory of non-resistance is the strongest part of Vivekananda's philosophy. "All great teachers [he writes] have taught, 'Resist not evil', that non-resistance is the highest moral ideal. We all know that, if a certain number of us attempted to put that maxim fully into practice, the whole social fabric would fall to pieces, the wicked would take possession of our properties and our lives, and would do whatever they liked with us. Even if only one day of such non-resistance were practised, it would lead to disaster. Yet, intuitively, in our heart of hearts we feel the truth of the teaching, 'Resist not evil'. This seems to us to be the highest ideal: yet to teach this doctrine only would be equivalent to condemning a vast portion of mankind."[1]

Thus, although in his heart of hearts Vivekananda felt the truth of the doctrine of non-resistance, he understood full well that this doctrine could not be used as a guide in social practices. He noted that "only when he [man—*V. B.*] has gained the power to resist, will non-resistance be a virtue".[2]

Intending to show that his positions do not contradict the classical canons of Hinduism, Vivekananda turns to the *Bhagavad-Gita*[3], recalling that, when Arjuna[4] preached the idea of non-resistance during hostilities, Sri-Krishna[5] called him a coward and a hypocrite:"Thou talkest like a wise man, but thy

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 35.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 37.
[3] *Bhagavad-Gita* (Divine Song) — a religious and philosophical work, part of the sixth book of the ancient Indian epic *Mahabharata*.
[4] A personage in the *Bhagavad-Gita*.
[5] The teacher and spiritual mentor of Arjuna.

actions betray thee to be a coward; therefore stand up and fight!"[1]

Vivekananda believed it to be the worst kind of evil in man to have a passive contemplative attitude to life, to reject vigorous activity, and to be indifferent to one's own destiny and the destiny of one's people. Nothing made him so indignant and impatient as quietism. In a speech before a foreign audience he recounted the following episode out of his life:

"I once met a man in my country whom I had known before as a very stupid dull person, who knew nothing and had not the desire to know anything, and was living the life of a brute. He asked me what he should do to know God, how he was to get free. 'Can you tell a lie?' I asked him. 'No,' he replied, 'Then you must learn to do so. It is better to tell a lie than to be a brute, or a log of wood; you are inactive, you have not certainly reached the highest state, which is beyond all actions, calm and serene; you are too dull even to do something wicked.' That was an extreme case, of course, and I was joking with him; but what I meant was, that a man must be active, in order to pass through activity to perfect calmness."[2]

All of Vivekananda's speeches and works contain an appeal to his compatriots to end the age-long hibernation, to gather spiritual and physical forces and to defend their vital interests. He exclaimed: "Awake, arise, and stop not till the desired end is reached..."[3]

Thus, being strong and active is the main slogan formulated by Vivekananda on the basis of the Karma-Yoga teaching. Under the conditions prevailing in India at the time, this slogan was in the first place directed against the theory and practice of non-resistance. Activity always means resistance, stressed the philosopher. "It is very easy to say, 'Hate nobody, resist not evil', but we know what that kind generally means in practice. When the eyes of society are turned towards us we may make a show of non-resistance, but in our hearts it is canker all the time. We feel the utter want of the calm of non-resistance; we feel that it would be better for us to resist. If you desire wealth, and know at the same time that the whole world regards him who aims at wealth as a very wicked man, you, perhaps, will not dare to plunge into the struggle for wealth, yet your mind will be running day and night after money. This is hypocrisy and will serve no purpose. Plunge into the world..."[1]

In determining the most important obligations of man in life, Vivekananda attributes decisive significance to the performance of these obligations. He believed that one could not judge man by the mere nature of his duties, but all should be judged by the manner and the spirit in which they perform them. According to Karma-Yoga, man must remember that all that he does, he does for himself rather than for nature (the universe). Nature existed before us and will exist without us; it does not need man's assistance; it has its own *karma*, and we need not puzzle our heads as to how we could do good for it. The question arises of man's motives for work. To this, Vivekananda answers: there are various forms of motivation for work. Some persons desire fame, others, money, still others, power, etc. "Others want

[1] Vivekananda, *The Complete Works*, Vol. I, p. 37.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 37-38.
[3] Vivekananda, *The Complete Works*, Vol. II, p. 138.

[1] Vivekananda, *Op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 38.

to leave a name when they die, as they do in China, when no man gets a title until he is dead; and that is a better way, after all, than with us."[1] All these kinds of work have a right to exist, and none should be held in contempt. But Karma-Yoga recommends working for the sake of work itself. We have a right to work but we have no right to the fruit of our work. Why not? The fact is, says Vivekananda, that there is not a single act of man that would be sheer goodness or sheer evil. Any act is by nature composed of good and evil. There can be no act that would not bring some good somewhere, and there can be no act that will not cause harm. Yet we are commanded to work incessantly, for "good and evil will both have their results, will produce their *Karma*. Good action will entail upon us good effect; bad action, bad. But good and bad are both bondages of the soul."[2]

Thus work for the Karma-Yogin is of purely *karma* significance. On the other hand, it creates fetters for man. But the ultimate goal of man (the soul) is release. What can one do to become free of the fetters of work? Vivekananda says that the way out has been pointed out in the *Bhagavad-Gita*: Work incessantly, but be not attached to it; always do what you have to without attachment; only he attains the supreme who is not bound as he begins work.

In other words, we must not await compensation for our work from people. We don't demand, say Karma-Yogis, something from our children in return for what we gave them. Our duty is to work for them, and there is an end to it. When we do something for another person, for the state, for society in which we live, we have to take the same position as

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 29, 30.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 51.

towards our children, awaiting nothing in return. If we invariably take the position of one who gives, and if all that we give will be free with regard to the world, without any thought of recompense, then our work will not create any attachment for us. Attachment to the results of work only arises in someone who expects reward.

Work without pay, absence of attachment to the results of one's work, generosity to the point of complete disregard for one's personal interest — all of this, according to Karma-Yoga, practically means complete selflessness. Vivekananda tells this parable on the subject.

"There was once a little village, and in it there dwelt a poor Brahman, with his wife, his son, and his son's wife. They were very poor and lived on small gifts made to them for preaching and teaching. There came in that land a three years' famine, and the poor Brahman suffered more than ever. At last when the family had starved for days, the father brought home one morning a little barley flour, which he had been fortunate enough to obtain, and he divided it into four parts, one for each member of the family. They prepared it for their meal, and just as they were about to eat there was a knock at the door. The father opened it, and there stood a guest. Now in India a guest is a sacred person; he is as a god for the time being, and must be treated as such. So the poor Brahman said, 'Come in, sir, you are welcome.' He set before the guest his own portion of the food, which the guest quickly ate and said, 'Oh, sir, you have killed me; I have been starving for ten days, and this little bit has but increased my hunger.' Then the wife said to her husband, 'Give him my share,'

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but the husband said, 'Not so.' The wife however insisted, saying, 'Here is a poor man, and it is our duty as householders to see that he is fed, and it is my duty as a wife to give him my portion, seeing that you have no more to offer him.' Then she gave her share to the guest, which he ate, and said that he was still burning with hunger. So the son said, 'Take my portion also; it is the duty of a son to help his father to fulfil his obligations.' The guest ate that, but remained still unsatisfied; so the son's wife gave him her portion also. That was sufficient, and the guest departed, blessing them. That night those four people died of starvation. Now you see what *Karma-Yoga* means: even at the point of death to help any one, without asking questions"[1]

The next problem which is considered and given an original interpretation in Karma-Yoga is the source and purpose of human knowledge. What is the *karma* of knowledge? The basic proposition here is this: all knowledge, being a fine form of the existence of matter, is always inside man, it is in his mind (or in his soul, to be more precise). Man does not receive any knowledge from outside, from the objects and phenomena of nature. Knowledge is in the mind, under a veil. The process of cognition does not consist in man copying or "photographing" the objects and phenomena of objective reality in his practical activity with the aid of the sense organs, creating on this basis concepts, judgements, etc., but rather in unveiling the deposits of knowledge in the soul. Vivekananda wrote: "We say Newton discovered gravitation. Was it sitting anywhere in

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 58-59, 60.

a corner waiting for him? It was in his own mind; the time came and he found it out. All knowledge that the world has ever received comes from mind; the infinite library of the universe is in your own mind."[1]

Thus the object of study is man's own mind. As for the external world, it is ascribed the status of stimulus for cognition. "The falling of an apple gave the suggestion to Newton, and he studied his own mind; he rearranged all the previous links of thought in his mind and discovered a new link among them, which we call the law of gravitation. It was not in the apple nor in anything in the centre of the earth..."[2]

Karma-Yoga says: like fire in a piece of flint, knowledge exists in the mind; the impressions received from the objects and phenomena of the external world are the strikes producing fire. All that a man feels and what he lives for — the smiles and the tears, joy and grief, pleasure and suffering—is brought from within us by so many blows. "The result is what we are; all these blows taken together are called *Karma*,—work, action. Every mental and physical blow that is given to the soul, by which, as it were, fire is struck from it, and by which its own power and knowledge are discovered, is *Karma*, this word being used in its widest sense; thus we are all doing *Karma* all the time. I am talking to you: that is *Karma*. You are listening: that is *Karma*... Everything we do, physical or mental, is *Karma* and leaves its marks on us."[3]

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 26.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 26-27.

At the same time Vivekananda pointed out that the formula "everything we do is *karma*" expresses a two-sided process: on the one hand, we act upon something, and on the other hand, something simultaneously acts on us. In making an impact on us, external objects do not give us knowledge but merely bring it out through blows; nevertheless they determine the things that will be brought out, that is, the nature of our mind and mood.

As he developed this idea, Vivekananda attributed particular significance to the effect of the actions of some people on the deeds of others. Thus, "when I am doing a certain action, my mind may be said to be in a certain state of vibration; all minds which are in similar circumstances will have the tendency to be affected by my mind. If there are different musical instruments tuned alike in one room, all of you may have noticed that when one is struck the others have the tendency to vibrate so as to give the same note. So all minds that have the same tension, so to say, will be equally affected by the same thought."[1] Light waves may travel for millions of years before they reach any object, so thought waves may travel hundreds of years before they meet an object with which they vibrate in unison. "It is quite possible, therefore, that this atmosphere of ours is full of such thought pulsations, both good and evil."[2]

The good and evil thoughts pulsating in space are subject, according to Vivekananda, to the same objective law of cause and effect as any other phenomenon of the material world. This law says: the action one has done cannot be destroyed until it has borne its fruit: no power in nature can stop it from

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 79.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 79-80.

yielding its results. If a person does an evil action, he must suffer for it. A good deed necessarily entails good fruit.

In interpreting this law Vivekananda expresses some profound dialectical thoughts, along with mystic ideas. All human actions and deeds, says he, both good and evil, are intimately connected with each other. We cannot put a line of demarcation and say, this action is entirely good and this entirely evil. Any action is simultaneously good and evil, and therefore the fruit of any action are simultaneously good and evil. "To take the nearest example: I am talking to you, and some of you, perhaps, think I am doing good; and at the same time I am, perhaps, killing thousands of microbes in the atmosphere; I am thus doing evil to something else. When it is very near to us and affects those we know, we say that it is very good action, if it affects them in a good manner. For instance, you may call my speaking to you very good, but the microbes will not; the microbes you do not see, but yourselves you do see. The way in which my talk affects you is obvious to you, but how it affects the microbes is not so obvious. And so if we analyse our evil actions also we may find that some good possibility results from them somewhere. He who in good action sees that there is something evil in it, and in the midst of evil sees that there is something good in it somewhere,—has known the secret of work."[1]

Thus, according to Vivekananda, there is no action which is perfectly pure, or any which is perfectly impure, taking purity and impurity in the sense of injury and non-injury, just as there are no absolutely pure phenomena in nature in general. Good and evil, happiness and unhappiness, life and death

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 81.

"are the obverse and reverse of the same coin".

Vivekananda says that man performs or experiences many thousands and millions of various actions throughout his life. But it is not any action that has a directly tangible practical significance for man; he does not notice many of them, although man's everyday life is made up of such actions, and they are in the majority. Although each of these commonplace, insignificant, and everyday actions may in itself be imperceptible, the sumtotal of these actions constitutes man's decisive characteristic, the essence of his personality.

"If you really want to judge of the character of a man, look not at his greatest performances. Every fool may become a hero at one time or another. Watch a man do his most common actions; those are indeed the things which will tell you the real character of a great man. Great occasions rouse even the lowest of human beings to some kind of greatness, but he alone is the really great man whose character is great always, the same wherever he be."[1] Man's greatness, Vivekananda stresses, is not determined by his position and office but by the conscientiousness of his performance of his everyday duties, of the work to which he was assigned or which he chose. Every man is great in his appointed place. "The scavenger in the street is quite as great and glorious as the king on his throne."[2]

Vivekananda decisively rejected the abstract approach to the phenomena of social life. This realism is the philosopher's contribution to the investigation of the problem of the essence of human personality. He wrote that each country and each people live

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 27.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 40.

under specific conditions, and, therefore, their concepts (e. g., those of morality, duty, etc.) will vary considerably. Thus, in some countries cousins may marry while in others such marriages are believed to be immoral; in some countries a person may marry only once while in others, many times, etc. The same may be said of duty. The concept of duty varies with place and time. If, for instance, a man goes out into the street and shoots down another man, that is bad. But if the same man, as a soldier, kills twenty men, he will feel that there is nothing bad about it, that that is courage.[1]

Vivekananda believes that duty and morality as a whole vary from people to people and, moreover, their content varies with changing historical circumstances. This proposition is also true of the individual cases. We have "to recognise [he wrote] that duty and morality vary under different circumstances; not that the man who resists evil is doing what is always and in itself wrong, but that in the different circumstances in which he is placed it may become even his duty to resist evil."[2]

Vivekananda believed the circumstances of life to be of decisive significance for the formation of an individual's will. He recognised Buddha to be a real historical personage, ascribing to him a "gigantic will" capable of turning whole worlds upside down. This will, in his words, "could not be obtained in one life". As for heredity, it did not and could not play the decisive role. "If it was only a case of hereditary transmission, how do you account for this petty prince [Buddha's father — *V. B.*] who was not, perhaps, obeyed by his own

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 62.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 36.

servants, producing this son, whom half a world worships?"[1]

The next aspect of *karma* as "the science of work" is the knowledge of relations between thought and word, the knowledge of what may be attained through the power of the word. Vivekananda believed that language arose in the course of communication between men, through billions of repetitions of everyday actions, or through "work" (the concept of work, as we have pointed out, embraces in Karma-Yoga any deed or action of man). The thought processes, whatever their form or source of origin, are also work. Cognitive work manifests itself in communication between men through words containing the corresponding ideas. The word is the form of thought, it does not exist separately from the idea, just as form does not exist separately from its content.

"Language is not the result of convention; it is not that people ever agreed to represent certain ideas by certain words; there never was an idea without a corresponding word or a word without a corresponding idea; ideas and words are by their nature inseparable. The symbols to represent ideas may be sound symbols or colour symbols. Deaf and dumb people have to think with other than sound symbols. Every thought in the mind has a form as its counterpart; this is called in Sanskrit philosophy nâma-rupa — name and form."[2]

Vivekananda points out the enormous role played by language in man's life. Men communicate mostly through language. Language is a magic form of communication; it does not require any special

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 28.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 71.

appliances or devices. I speak to you without touching you, but the vibrations of the air produced by my speech penetrate into your ear, affect your nerves and produce a certain effect on your brain. You cannot resist it. The word has great power. The word may move man to perform both great feats and ordinary acts.

Religious symbols and ritual are also recognised to be part or aspect of Karma-Yoga. This aspect arises from the premise that any religion consists of three principal parts: philosophy, mythology, and ritual. Philosophy is regarded as the essence of religion. Mythology is intended to "explain and illustrate" religion by means of the more or less legendary lives of great men, stories and fables of wonderful things, and so on. Ritual is supposed to give to that philosophy "a still more concrete form, so that everyone may grasp it — ritual is in fact concretised philosophy. This ritual is *Karma*."[1]

These are the principal aspects of Karma-Yoga. Its most general idea is this. Having realised that all that is manifested (the whole of the material world, nature) is only part of the One Brahman, we have to understand why everything in this world is imperfect. But knowing that everything in the world, including ourselves, is a derivative of the One, of the integral, of the perfect, we have to understand why we are striving towards perfection. The path to perfection lies through struggle which constitutes, properly speaking, the content and meaning of earthly being. "This complex struggle between something inside and the external world is what we call life [Vivekananda believes]. So it is clear that when

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 70.

this struggle ceases, there will be an end of life... What is meant by ideal happiness is that — when there is the cessation of this struggle",[1] that is, release.

5. *Bhakti-Yoga*

Bhakti-Yoga is a method of attaining release through love and loyalty to the god Ishvara. "Bhakti [writes Vivekananda] is a series or succession of mental efforts at religious realisation beginning with ordinary worship and ending in a supreme intensity of love for the Ishvara."[2] Ishvara is He "from Whom is the birth, continuation and dissolution of the universe". He is essentially identical with Brahman, which is "too much of an abstraction to be loved and worshipped" by millions of ordinary people. "Ishvara is the highest ... possible reading of the Absolute by the human mind", the relative aspect of Brahman.[3] As is written in the Upanisads, "Brahman is as the clay or substance out of which an infinite variety of articles are fashioned. As clay, they are all one; but form or manifestation differentiates them. Before every one of them was made, they all existed potentially in the clay, and, of course, they are identical substantially; but when formed, and so long as the form remains, they are separate and different." Ishvara is precisely a concrete but most general manifestation of Brahman, a manifestation at a higher level, as it were.

From the standpoint of Bhakti-Yoga, "in the universe Brahma ... first manifested himself as name, and then as form, i. e., as this universe. All this expressed sensible universe as the form, behind which stands the eternal inexpressible (*sphota*), the manifester as Logos or Word. This eternal *sphota*, the essential eternal material of all ideas or names, is the power through which the Lord creates the universe; nay, the Lord first becomes conditioned as the *sphota*, and then evolves Himself out as the yet more concrete sensible universe."[1] In other words, *sphota* is the forefather of all ideas, their common basis and even the essence. "...If all the peculiarities which distinguish one word from another be removed, then what remains will be the sphota."[2]

Man found the appropriate sound (language) form to express particular ideas. But what form can express *sphota* which is inexpressible? If we express it, that is, if we give it a definition, a sound (language) form, we shall thereby restrict it and it will cease to be itself. Bhakti-Yoga expresses *sphota* by a sound which "most approximately expresses its nature"— the sound Om. Here the word (symbol, sound) Om is intended as a generalised symbol of all possible sounds. *Sphota* is often referred to as Nada-Brahman, or the sound-Brahman.

Bhakti-Yoga is divided into two stages, the preparatory one (*gauni*) and the supreme one (*parâ*). The preparatory or lower form of Bhakti, Vivekananda writes, is for men who do not rise above sensuous pleasures. The meaning of life for them is in "eating, drinking, begetting progeny, and dying". They must wait and go through many more births

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 82.
[2] Vivekananda, *The Complete Works*, Vol. III, p. 36.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 37.

[1] *Ibid.*
[2] *Ibid.*

and reincarnations to learn to feel even the faintest necessity for anything higher. "But those to whom the eternal interests of the soul are of much higher value than the fleeting interests of this mundane life, to whom the gratification of the senses is but like the thoughtless play of the baby, to them, God and the love of God, form the highest and the only utility of human existence."[1] At the preparatory stage all men "are conscious or unconscious materialists". By materialists Vivekananda here does not mean philosophers recognising the primacy of matter and the secondary nature of consciousness but rather men for whom the increase of material enjoyment is "the alpha and omega of human life".

Almost all men at the lower stage of *bhakti* are fanatics, according to Vivekananda. "The fanatical crew in Hinduism, or Mahommedanism, or Christianity, have always been almost exclusively recruited from these worshippers on the lower planes of Bhakti."[2] The lower Bhakta with his weak and undeveloped mind has only one way of loving his own ideal, i. e., by hating every other ideal. Vivekananda compares this kind of love with the canine instinct of guarding the master's property from intrusion. Only the instinct of the dog, says Vivekananda, is better than the reason of man, for the dog never mistakes his master for an enemy in whatever dress he may come before it. As for the fanatic, he is incapable of distinguishing between truth and error.

Great significance was ascribed to mythology and ritual as an auxiliary method in the transition

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 43.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 32.

from *gauni-bhakti* to *parâ-bhakti*. "... Spiritual giants have been produced only in those systems of religion where there is an exuberant growth of rich mythology and ritualism."[1] (A Bhakta has to know, writes Vivekananda, that there are many different religions in the world, but there are even more forms of worshipping God.) It was Chaitanya who said, "so many opinions are so many ways" (of worship), and they all have a right to exist.

Entering upon earthly life, man has to choose an ideal and be loyal to it to the end of his days. In this role he is like the pearl-oyster that "leaves its bed at the bottom of the sea, and comes up to the surface to catch the rain-water... and then it dives deep down to its sea-bed, and there rests until it has succeeded in fashioning a beautiful pearl out of that rain-drop."[2] The fashioning of the pearl of one's personality requires great spirituality and purity from the Bhakta, which only becomes possible through strict observance of the rules of moral hygiene. Ramanuja said that there were five such rules:

(1) *Satya*, truthfulness.

(2) *Arjava*, sincerity.

(3) *Daya*, kindness to others without any gain to one's self.

(4) *Ahimsa*, not injuring others by thought, or word or deed.

(5) *Abhidhya*, not coveting others' goods, not thinking vain thoughts, and not brooding over injuries received from others.

Strict observance of these five points would mean, in Vivekananda's view, renunciation, or transition

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 44.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 63-64.

to the highest form of worship — *para-bhakti.*

Renunciation, stressed Vivekananda, is the cornerstone of any spiritual perfection, and therefore the preaching of renunciation will be found in all types of Yoga in one form or another.

The Karma-Yogin's renunciation is in the shape of giving up all the fruits of his actions, all attachment to the results of his labours, all care for any reward here or hereafter.

The Raja-Yogin must ultimately understand, by his study of nature, that the whole of nature is intended for the soul to acquire experience, and that the result of all the experiences of the soul is for it to become aware of its eternal separateness from nature, of it being spirit, not matter, and of its conjunction with matter being only temporary. In short, the Raja-Yogin's renunciation results from his own experience of nature.

The Jnana-Yogin has to know from the start that nature, which seems so unshakeable and massive, is no more than illusion. He has to understand that all manifestations of power in nature are produced by the soul, not by nature, that all knowledge and all experience are also in the soul. He has to tear himself away from all bondage to nature, letting nature and all that belongs to her go, and trying to stand alone. The Jnana-Yogin's renunciation is referred to by Vivekananda as "the harshest of all renunciations".

The most natural, in his words, is the renunciation of the Bhakti-Yogin, for there is no violence here. The point is that the renunciation necessary for attaining *para-bhakti*, does not require suppression of anything; it is like a strong light in the presence of which the less intense ones become dimmer and dimmer until they vanish completely. So this love

of the pleasures of the senses and of the intellect grows weaker in ascending to the summits of *parabhakti* and finally vanishes altogether.

At this stage "forms vanish" (that is, the concrete objects and phenomena of the material world disappear), "rituals fly away, books are superseded, images, temples, churches, religions and sects... all these little limitations and bondages fall off by their own nature". Nothing remains to bind man or fetter his freedom. The soul becomes free (*moksha, nirvana*).[1]

6. *Jnana-Yoga*

Jnana-Yoga is the mode of release through knowledge (*jnana*); as soon as ignorance (*avidya*) is destroyed, the human soul (*jiva*) becomes free.

The basic position here is the Vedanta (*advaita*) proposition that all that is, man included, is a derivative of Brahman. Man and all that is (the universe) are one. Man consists of the same elements as the universe; he is the universe in miniature.

Hence the conclusion: know thyself, and thou wilt know the basis of all that is. "If I know one lump of clay, I know the whole mass of clay,"[2] wrote Vivekananda, referring to the Upanisads.

Vivekananda did not write any special works on epistemology. Various views on the subject were ex-

[1] The various modes of attaining *nirvana* and *moksha*, just as all the religious modes of release, have taken shape historically in India — through division of society into *varnas* and castes. The Sudras, for instance, had practically no access to education (literacy), so that the most suitable mode of attaining release for them was not *jnana* (knowledge) but *bhakti* (religious belief).

[2] Vivekananda, *The Complete Works*, Vol. VI, p. 39.

pressed in many of his works. His epistemological positions are most clearly outlined in comments on Jnana-Yoga and in a number of articles ("Introduction to Jnana-Yoga", "Knowledge: Its Source and Acquirement", and others).

The question with which any epistemology should begin is, according to Vivekananda, that of the primary source of knowledge.

That is a very hard question, he points out; man has been pondering it for many centuries. In the Upanisads we read, for instance, that Brahman-Atman held the key to all knowledge. He handed that key down from generation to generation, but he only passed it on to the select. "He [the Atman — *V. B.*] is attained by him whom He chooses. To him alone does the Atman reveal his own Truth" (*Kathopanisad,* 1,2.23).

Jainists believe that once upon a time the Jainas opened the path to knowledge for all mankind. The Buddhists, in their turn, hold that from time to time, at definite periods in history, *boddhisattvas* are born, that is, individuals who possess infinite universal wisdom.

As for the Vedantic and other philosophers of the Indian schools, writes Vivekananda, they think that knowledge is not to be acquired from without. It is the innate nature of the human soul —"the repository of infinite wisdom".

According to some Indian philosophical schools, this infinite wisdom remains always the same and is never lost; and man is not ordinarily conscious of this, because a veil, so to speak, has fallen over it on account of his evil deeds, but as soon as the veil is removed it reveals itself.

Philosophers of other schools assert that this "infinite wisdom", though potentially present in

the human soul, has become contracted through evil deeds, and it becomes expanded again by the mercy of God, gained by good deeds.

All the Yogas are mentioned among the methods through which the innate ability for knowledge is manifested.

Jnana-Yogis "have come to the conclusion that when the individual mind on the one hand, and favourable time, place and causation on the other, can act and react upon one another, then highly developed consciousness of knowledge is sure to follow".[1] The expression "consciousness of knowledge" is not accidental here. From the standpoint of Vivekananda (and of the Jnana-Yogis) man does not receive knowledge from the objects and phenomena of the external world. Man always has knowledge, but it is covered by a veil or hidden like fire in flint. The objects and phenomena of the external world are absolutely necessary, knowledge cannot be obtained without them, but all they do is merely to raise the veil over knowledge or bring out knowledge from the soul in the same way as the steel strikes fire from a flint. It so appears that knowledge is realised within, not obtained from without.

In what way did Vivekananda picture the concrete process of obtaining knowledge by man? In the lecture he read in New York on January 1896, he cited the following example.

Suppose I go into the street and see a dog. How do I know it is a dog? I refer it to my mind, and in my mind are groups of all my past experience, arranged, and pigeon-holed, as it were. As soon as a new impression comes, I take it up and refer

[1] Vivekananda, *The Complete Works,* Vol. IV, p. 365.

it to some of the old pigeon-holes, and as soon as I find a group of the same impressions already existing, I place it in that group, and I am satisfied. I know it is a dog, because it coincides with impressions already there. When I do not find the cognate of this new experience inside, I become dissatisfied. When, not finding the cognates of an impression, we become dissatisfied, this state of mind is called "ignorance"; but, when, finding the cognates of an impression already existing, we become satisfied, this is called "knowledge". When an apple fell, men became dissatisfied. Then gradually they found out the group. What was the group they found? That all apples fall, so they called it "gravitation".

"Now we see [concludes Vivekananda], that without a fund of already existing experience, any new experience would be impossible, for there would be nothing to which to refer the new impression. So if, as some of the European philosophers think, a child came into the world with what they call *tabula rasa*, such a child would never attain any degree of intellectual power, because he would have nothing to which to refer his new experience. We see that the power of acquiring knowledge varies in each individual, and this shows that each one of us has come with his own fund of knowledge. Knowledge can only be got in one way, the way of experience; there is no other way to know. If we have not experienced it in this life, we must have experienced it in other lives,"[1] according to Karma-Yoga. It is the law of *karma* that has to explain, in his view, the innateness of conscious actions as the result of experiences in

[1] Vivekananda, *The Complete Works*, Vol. III, p. 220.

previous births. Otherwise it is impossible to understand why, for instance, the "fear of death is everywhere". A little chicken is just out of an egg and an eagle comes, and the chicken flies in fear to his mother. Whence comes his fear of death? Another example. How is that as soon as a duckling hatched by a hen comes near water, it jumps into it and swims? It never swam before.

Explaining these phenomena by the action of instinct in the usual acceptation of the term is inadequate, for according to Vivekananda, "it leaves us where we were before". What we call instinct in man or animals must include innate conscious actions, for consciousness is only a name for the surface of the mental ocean, but all our experiences are accumulated in its depths. In other words, it is insisted here that both subconscious and conscious phenomena are inherited. "The theory then comes to this [writes Vivekananda], that there is hereditary transmission, so far as furnishing the material to the soul is concerned. But the soul migrates, and manufactures body after body, and each thought we think, and each deed we do, is stored in it in fine forms, ready to spring up again and take a new shape."[1]

Vivekananda recognises three states of consciousness: instinct, reason, and superconsciousness; or the unconscious, the conscious and the superconscious states; all of them belong to the same consciousness. There are no three kinds of consciousness, but one kind develops into another. Consciousness itself has the form of superconscious state superior to intellect. When consciousness attains the supreme state, man possesses knowledge that is superior to intellectual knowledge.

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 223.

The person who has developed his consciousness to this supreme state becomes free.

7. Raja-Yoga

Raja-Yoga is a method of attaining freedom through a number of ethical, physical, and psychical exercises.

Following the Samkhya philosophy, Raja-Yogis believe that *prakrti* and *purusa*, that is, matter and consciousness, are two separate substances independent of each other. However, a misfortune once occurred in the remote times forgotten by mankind: *purusa* permitted *avidya* (ignorance or, in the *advaita* terminology, untrue knowledge), which entailed confusion and mutual interpenetration of these two substances; *purusa* found itself in the power of *prakrti* and since then has been unable to regain its original independent state.

According to the Yogins, Raja-Yogins included, man is a special case of mixture of *prakrti* and *purusa*, that is, of body and soul. Everything that goes to make up the body belongs to the material world, that is, to the sphere of "untrue being". Everything that pertains to the soul, to the essence of man, is linked with "true being": the absolute soul, *purusa, atman*.

What are the relations between these representatives of "true" and "untrue" being? "This world [Vivekananda writes] is not our habitation, it is only one of the many stages through which we are passing. Remember that great saying of the Samkhya, 'The whole of nature is for the soul, not the soul for nature.' The very reason of nature's existence is for the education of the soul; it has no other meaning; it is there because the soul must have knowledge, and through knowledge free itself. If we remember this always, we shall never be attached to nature; we shall know that nature is a book in which we are to read, and that when we have gained the required knowledge the book is of no more value to us."[1]

Rejecting man's attachment to the physical world, the Yogins also invoke the *Bhagavad-Gita*:

"...That man alone is wise
Who keeps the mastery of himself! If one
Ponders on objects of the sense, there springs
Attraction; from attraction grows desire,
Desire flames to fierce passion, passion breeds
Recklessness; then the memory — all betrayed —
Lets noble purpose go, and saps the mind,
Till purpose, mind, and man are all undone..."[2]

The doctrine of Raja-Yoga was systematised by Patanjali (c. 2nd century B. C.). He formulated the so-called eight-stage path of freeing the soul (see diagram)

During the first two stages (*yama, niyama*), man has to go through ethical training.

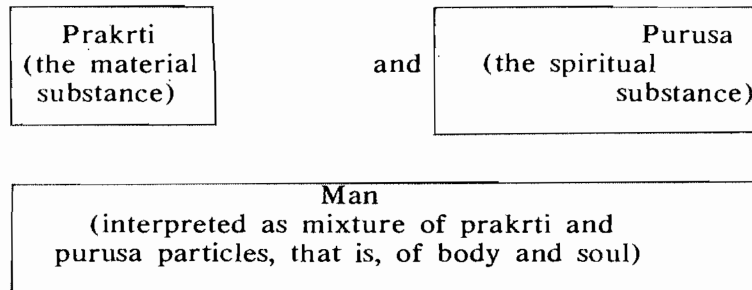
Yama is refraining from evil towards all living creatures, doing no hurt to any kind of life (*ahimsa*); refraining from lying, truthfulness in thought and speech (*satya*); honesty, refraining from stealing and greed (*asteya*); non-acceptance of gifts (*aparigraha*), etc.

Niyama. At the first stage a person must learn to refrain from vicious (criminal, or sinful) actions, while at the second stage he must develop positive habits or qualities; he must be neat, keeping his

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[1] Vivekananda, *The Complete Works*, Vol. I, pp. 54-55.
[2] "The Song Celestial", *Bhagavad-Gita*, Jaico Publishing House, Bombay, 1957, p. 12.

The Diagram
of the Eight-Stage Path of Freedom



To free his soul from the body, man has to go through the following eight stages:

Stages	Discipline
(1) Yama, abstention (2) Niyama, culture	The discipline of morality
(3) Asana, posture (4) Pranayama, control of breathing (5) Pratyahara, removal of feelings	The discipline of the body
(6) Dharana, attention (7) Dhyana, contemplation of the object (8) Samadhi, concentration or absorption of the mind in the object of contemplation	The discipline of the mind

body clean; he must be tidy in preparing and taking food; he must cultivate the feelings of friendship, sympathy, cheerfulness, and imperturbability; he must observe ascetic vows, be able to withstand heat, cold, etc.; he must be satisfied

with whatever comes of itself, without strain; he must regularly read religious books, meditate on God, etc.

During the next three stages (*asana, pranayama, pratyahara*) a person develops the discipline of the body through a series of physical exercises aimed at training and hardening the organism in certain ritual postures, for the higher stages (the sixth, the seventh, and the eighth) require great physical stamina. The discipline of the body is developed by the *Hatha-Yoga.*

The three higher stages (*dharana, dhyana, samadhi*) involve psychical exercises. "Since the Yoga insists on attaining freedom through samadhi [writes Radhakrishnan], it is defined as samadhi, *Yogah samadhih.* It is the ecstatic condition in which the connection with the outer world is broken... It is the goal of the Yoga discipline, since it lifts the soul from its temporal, conditioned, changing existence into a simple, eternal and perfect life. The purusa regains through it the eternal status."[1]

These are the basic positions, the content and the goal of the Raja-Yoga doctrine.

Let us note first of all that the Yogins do not know and neither do they understand man's true essence. Marxism, which revealed the laws of social development, formulated for the first time the genuinely scientific definition of man's essence as the totality of all social relations. That means that man's practical and theoretical activity is social in its content and form, in its mode of emergence and development, and in its stimuli arising from the needs.

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[1] S. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy,* Vol. II, p. 358.

Let us turn to the basic methodological and medical principles on which the entire system of treatment and physical development is based in Hatha-Yoga.

The theory of prana. The Raja-Yogis hold the view, common to all the Yogis, that the universe as a whole is composed of matter and force. All that exists is the result of primary matter (*akasha*) and primary force (*prana*). Any material object (phenomenon) is a manifestation of *akasha*, just as any force (energy) is a manifestation of *prana*.

"It is the *Akasha* that becomes the air, that becomes the liquids, that becomes the solids; it is the *Akasha* that becomes the sun, the earth, the moon, the stars, the comets; it is the *Akasha* that becomes the human body, the animal body, the plants, every form that we see, everything that can be sensed, everything that exists."[1] Everything that is floats in *akasha*, like pieces of ice floating in a lake. "So everything that exists is composed of this *akasha*, and is floating in this ocean."[2] At the beginning of a cycle of nature there is only this *akasha*, at the end of the cycle the solids, the liquids, and the gases all melt into the *akasha* again, and the next creation similarly proceeds out of this *akasha*.

What is the efficient and productive force that is behind these cycles? According to the Yogis, this force is *prana*, the sumtotal of the universe's energy. "Just as *Akasha* is the infinite, omnipresent material of this universe, so is this *Prana* the infinite, omnipresent manifesting power of this universe. At the beginning and at the end of a

[1] Vivekananda, *The Complete Works*, Vol. I, p. 147.
[2] Vivekananda, *Op. cit.*, Vol. VIII, p. 192.

cycle everything becomes *Akasha*, and all the forces that are in the universe resolve back into the *Prana*; in the next cycle, out of this *Prana* is evolved everything that we call energy, everything that we call force."[1]

It is the *prana*, explains Vivekananda, that is manifesting as motion, magnetism, gravitation, etc. It is the *prana* that is manifesting as the actions of the body, as the nerve currents, as thought force. The knowledge and control of this *prana* is really what is meant by *Prânâyâma*.

Mastering the prana, according to Vivekananda opens to man the door to almost unlimited power; man would be able, for instance, "to move the sun and stars out of their places, to control everything in the universe, from the atoms to the biggest suns, because he would control the *Prana*... All the forces of nature will obey him as slaves..."[2]

But what is *prana* in practical terms and in what way can it be mastered? In the most general form, this problem was raised already in the Vedas: "What is that, knowing which we shall know everything?" In the Vedas, all nature is presented as dissolved in absolute being. It is maintained accordingly that he who has understood being, has understood the universe.

The Raja-Yogis reason in a similar way. For them, all the forces of nature are generalised in the *prana*. He who has mastered the *prana*, has mastered all the forces of nature. He who has mastered the *prana*, has mastered not only his own body and consciousness but all bodies and all consciousness that exist, for the *prana* is a gener-

[1] *Vivekananda, Op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 147.
[2] Vivekananda, *The Complete Works*, Vol. I, p. 148.

alised manifestation of force. Any manifestation of force is discovering the *prana*. The *prana* may be manifested both in man and in nature that surrounds him. Accordingly, Prânâyâma may be directed both at the man's inner world and at nature.

The *prana*, which manifests itself as mental power, can only be controlled by inner, mental means, according to Vivekananda. To attain mastery of body and consciousness, we must first resort to certain physical means, and when sufficient control of the body is gained, we can try to work on consciousness as well. By working on our consciousness, we acquire the ability to control it, compelling it to work in the desired direction and enforcing it to concentrate power at will.

As for the *prana* acting in nature, it is, Vivekananda says, controlled by external means. The science of physics here plays the role of Prânâyâma. "What moves the steam engine? *Prana*, acting through the steam. What are all these phenomena of electricity and so forth but *Prana*? What is physical science? The science of Prânâyâma by external means."[1]

In many books on Yoga it is insisted that Prânâyâma is control of breathing. This assertion is not a precise expression of the category in question, Vivekananda says. Prânâyâma really means controlling the motion of the lungs and this motion is associated with the breath... The *Prana* is moving the lungs, the movement of the lungs draws in the air. So Prânâyâma is... controlling that muscular power which moves the lungs. "That muscular power which goes out through

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 159.

the nerves to the muscles and from them to the lungs, making them move in a certain manner, is the *Prana*, which we have to control in the practice of Prânâyâma."[1]

Taking this conception of the *prana* and of Prânâyâma as their basic premise, Raja-Yogis maintain that man is capable of controlling almost any part of his body — the muscles, the nerves, groups of cells and even individual cells. If that is so, "all the sickness and misery felt in the body will be perfectly controlled: not only so, you will be able to control another's body".[2]

That is the theoretical foundation of the famous Yogic psychotherapy.

According to the Yogis, the omnipresent *prana* moves freely and easily not only within each body but also from body to body. In this sense, "everything is infectious in this world, good or bad".[3] Having learned to control the *prana*, one can easily cure oneself or transmit health to others. This, says Vivekananda, can be done through the word (by suggestion), through the example of one's personal behaviour (cheerful appearance, tidiness, optimism), or through action (for instance, when someone has the sciatica, the Yogin can transmit a flow of the *prana* by a simple stroking of the painful spot), etc.

Thus Raja-Yoga directs man's energy towards the search for and obtaining of the mystical *prana* rather than towards cognition of the social and biological laws and their utilisation in the interests of man's life and health.

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 152-53.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 153.
[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 153-154.

The theory of the cell. According to Patanjali, the Yoga system consists of four parts. The first part deals with the nature, goals and forms of the Yoga; the second part, with the means of attaining *samadhi;* the third part, the description of the inner aspects of the Yoga, of the supernatural powers allegedly acquired by its practical application, etc.; finally, the fourth part comprises the description of the nature and forms of release.

Patanjali's Yoga does not include the theory of the cell. There is no mention of the cell in other adherents of this system up to the second half of the 19th century. The concept and the theory of the cell appeared in the writings of the Yogins only recently, under the impact of European cell theories and in the first place, apparently, under the impact of Rudolf Virchow's theory.

It is a well-known fact that the basic proposition of Virchow's theory is absolute autonomy of each cell as the cause of existence, for Virchow was to the end of his days a resolute opponent of the idea of the unity of the organism. In his view, the human organism is a mere sum of the constituent cells.

The Yogic doctrine of the cell was propounded by Ramacharaka.[1] "Hatha Yoga teaches [he wrote] that the physical body is built up of cells, each cell containing within it a miniature 'life' which controls its action. These 'lives' are really bits of intelligent mind of a certain degree of development, which enable the cells to do their work properly."[2]

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[1] That was the name assumed by William Atkinson, a Pennsylvania judge.

[2] Yogi Ramacharaka, *Hatha Yoga or the Yogi Philosophy of Physical Well-Being,* L. N. Fowler & Co. London, p. 137.

The influence of Virchow is here quite obvious, although the structure of the cell is understood in a slightly different way. Ramacharaka insists that the cell of the body has, according to the Hatha-Yoga, three basic principles: (1) Matter, which it obtains from the food; (2) *Prana,* or vital force, which enables cells to manifest action; (3) Intelligence, or "mind-stuff", which is part of the Universal Mind.

From the standpoint of modern science, a cell is an elementary system on which the structure of life activity of all animal and vegetable organisms is based. The cell consists of two principal parts, the cytoplasm and the nucleus. The cytoplasm and the nucleus matter (caryoplasm) taken together are called protoplasm. The principal components of the protoplasm are proteins in combination with various organic substances, as well as fats, lipoids, carbohydrates, nucleic acids, inorganic salts, water (some 70 to 80 per cent). The nucleus contains chromatin. The protoplasm contains permanent components called organoids. The life of the cell is maintained through continuous metabolism.

Along with the microscopic structure revealed by the light microscope, the electronic microscope, which is hundreds of times more powerful, discloses a complex and varied submicroscopic structure of the cell protoplasm and its parts.

The cell multiplies by division into two filial cells. The cells of the embryo of any multicellular organism, which are at first relatively uniform, are formed through successive multiple division of the fertilised ovum.

They later become specialised. Tissues are formed which perform various functions.

Despite the fact that cells are elementary structural units, in which the processes of assimilation

and dissimilation take place (and these are the processes that are involved in the principal manifestations of life), the life activity of an integral organism cannot of course be regarded as the sum of the lives of the component cells.

The view that the cells of the human organism are intelligent figures prominently in the modern Yogi teaching.

Here is what Ramacharaka writes: "These cell intelligencies manifest a perfect adaption for their particular work. The selective action of the cells, extracting from the blood the nourishment required, and rejecting that which is not needed is an instance of this intelligence. The process of digestion, assimilation, etc., shows the intelligence of the cells, either separately or collectively, in groups."[1]

Modern science has not discovered any ability for independent thinking in cells for the simple reason that this ability does not exist. The brain is the organ of reasoning in man. Thinking is the function of the brain and at the same time the product of social development. Reason is the highest stage in the cognitive activity of man as a social being — the ability to think logically, to grasp the properties and meaning of phenomena. Invoking the "reason" of cells is mysticism and the result of ignorance.

The theory of breathing. The cornerstone of Hatha-Yoga is the theory of breathing or Prânâyâma. The place and significance of this category in the Raja-Yoga system was vividly and precisely described by Vivekananda in the following parable.

[1] Yogi Ramacharaka, *Op. cit.*, p. 137.

> There was once a minister to a great king. He fell into disgrace. As a punishment, the king ordered him to be shut up in the top of a very high tower. This was done, and the minister was left there to perish. He had a faithful wife, however, who came to the tower at night and called to her husband at the top to know what she could do to help him. He told her to return to the tower the following night and bring with her a long rope, some stout twine, packthread, silk thread, a beetle, and a little honey. Wondering much, the good wife obeyed her husband and brought him the desired articles. The husband directed her to attach the silk thread firmly to the beetle, then to smear its horns with a drop of honey and set it free on the wall of the tower with its head pointing upward. She obeyed all these instructions, and the beetle started on its long journey. Smelling the honey ahead it slowly crept onward, in the hope of reaching the honey, until at last it reached the top of the tower, when the minister grasped the beetle and got possession of the silk thread. He told his wife to tie the other end to the packthread, and after he had drawn up the packthread he repeated the process with the stout twine, and lastly with the rope. Then the rest was easy. The minister descended from the tower by means of the rope and made his escape. In this body of ours the motion of the breath is the silk thread; by laying hold of and learning to control it we grasp the packthread of the nerve currents, and from these the stout twine of our thoughts, and lastly the rope of the prana, controlling which we reach freedom.[1]

It should be noted that the adherents of the Yoga system endeavour to lend social character to their theory of breathing. Yogis believe that correct breathing may give health not only to individuals or peoples but to the whole of mankind. Ramacharaka writes that "one generation of correct breathers would regenerate the race, and disease would be so rare as to be looked upon as a curiosity".[2] It becomes strikingly obvious again that the

[1] Vivekananda, *The Yogas and Other Works*, Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center, New York, 1953, p. 589.

[2] Yogi Ramacharaka, *Hatha Yoga*, p. 105.

Yogis completely fail to understand, or else they reject, man's social nature.

The social conditions, however, have a decisive significance for man's health, and the people of India understand that full well. It is a fact known to all the world that in the recent centuries India, the birthplace of the Yoga, has seen millions of people, Yogins included, starve to death and die of diseases. No amount of "correct breathing" could help here, and it could not have helped while the country was in the clutches of the British colonialists. Indians began "breathing correctly" only when they attained political independence for their country.

Man's health depends not only on the level of physical fitness or the health services as a whole but also on the socio-political causes. Moreover, the very standard of the health services depends on the nature of the social system in the given country. For example, people in the Soviet Union enjoy free medical services, an annual paid leave, and some other advantages of free socialist labour. Under these conditions, exceptionally favourable opportunities are available to the people for improving their health and for longevity.

As for the revival of the whole of mankind, it is already taking place. Yet this revival is not achieved by mystics endeavouring to separate the soul from the body and believing in the supernatural forces but by those who build a new and genuinely happy life — a life without hunger and privations, without slavery and oppression.

8. Vivekananda's Sociological Views

It is not always that Vivekananda's teaching is elucidated in its close ties with the historical conditions of the times and with the development of the national liberation movement in India. For Abhedananda, for instance, Vivekananda is "the Hindu Sannyâsin monk", "a preacher of truth [that] occasionally appears like a gigantic comet above the horizon".[1] In the *History of Philosophy* edited by Sarvepalli Radhakishnan, Vivekananda is regarded mostly as the populariser of Ramakrishna's teaching.

The view has also been expressed in Indian socio-political and philosophical literature that Vivekananda shunned politics and took a negative stand towards political activity. It should be noted, however, that the term "politics" in Vivekananda's writings (just as in those of Rabindranath Tagore and many other Indian thinkers) was often used to denote the anti-Indian policy of the British colonialists.

On the other hand, the concept of religion and of religious life was linked in Vivekananda's view with the mode of life based on the principle of peaceful cooperation of all men, of their equality and mutual respect. This distinctive feature, according to Vivekananda, is inherent in the first place in the Indian people, for that enormous people is the only one in the entire history of mankind that never left the boundaries of the country to conquer other peoples, although it was itself permanently the object of plunder and

[1] Abhedananda, *Vivekananda and His Work*, Ramakrishna Vedanta Math., Calcutta, 1950, pp. 8,9.

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oppression. From this standpoint, one can better understand the true meaning of Vivekananda's words often quoted in bourgeois literature: "each nation, like each individual, has one theme in this life, which is its centre... In one nation political power is its vitality, as in England. Artistic life in another, and so on. In India, religious life forms the centre, the keynote of the whole music of national life... So in India, social reform has to be preached by showing how much more spiritual a life the new system will bring, and politics has to be preached by showing how much it will improve the one thing that the nation wants — its spirituality."[1]

Vivekananda was not only a philosopher but also a major public and political figure. Vivekananda's sociological views, correlated with the Indian reality of the late 19th century, answer the characteristic, with due consideration for historical specificity, which Lenin gave in 1894 to the peasant socialism of the Narodists: "radical-democratic representation of the petty-bourgeois peasantry".[2]

Vivekananda endeavoured to find a true theory of social development substantiating the law-governed nature of radical reform of social life, to create a new sociology answering the interests of the popular masses, that is to say, of Indian peasants in the first place. But he failed to create such a theory, his views of history being idealistic.

Vivekananda did not understand the specificity

[1] Vivekananda, *The Complete Works*, Vol. III, p. 220.

[2] There are no grounds to believe that Vivekananda is the ideologue of the Indian revolutionary peasantry, a revolutionary democrat, and that some of his statements even coincide with the theoretical propositions of Marxism (on the subject of the classes and class struggle, on proletarian dictatorship, etc.).

of the laws of social development or, to be more exact, he rejected the proposition that social life develops according to laws qualitatively different from the laws of nature and of human reason.

Following his basic philosophical premise that the entire universe (from sandgrains to cosmic bodies, from amoeba to man) is subject to the action of identical universal laws (the *karma* law, the *prana* as the motive force, etc.), he believed that society develops cyclically: a rise is followed by a fall, another rise is followed by another fall, etc. At the same time he recognised that with each cycle society, just as all that is, rises to higher and still higher stages and is perfected. "The history of nations is like that: they rise and they fall; after the rise comes a fall, again out of the fall comes a rise with greater power... In every nation's spiritual life there is a fall as well as a rise."[1]

Vivekananda divided the whole of Indian society into two classes, the rich ("the upper class") and the poor ("the lower class"). The lower class (the sudras) are the people, the masses; the future is theirs. Vivekananda believed that the only hope of India was from the masses, for the upper classes were physically and morally dead. In the European countries there were also classes of men who, in the name of politics, rob others and grow fat on the blood of the masses... He believed that a time would come when the sudras of all countries would rise, throw off the dominance of the upper classes and establish everywhere their absolute supremacy.

Vivekananda was one of the first thinkers in

[1] Vivekananda, *The Complete Works*, Vol. IV, p. 116.

India to call himself a socialist, under the impact of European socialist literature. "Everything goes to show [he wrote] that socialism or some form of rule by the people, call it what you will, is coming on the boards. The people will certainly want the satisfaction of their material needs, less work, no oppression, no war, more food."[1]

At the same time Vivekananda failed to realise the genuine significance of the profound social changes that took place in India at the end of the 19th century. On the one hand, the colonial exploitation of the Indian people sharply increased as British capitalism entered the monopolist stage of its development. On the other hand, a new mode of production was making headway, however hard the process might be: capitalist India came to replace feudal India. Class differentiation in the Indian village grew, and a new generation of peasants was born, a generation of men who had been to the cities selling their labour and who had learnt a great deal from the bitter experiences of wandering and hiring out their labour. The number of workers in major cities, at factories and plants, grew steadily.

Vivekananda did not understand the laws and the historical significance of all these processes. He only saw one fact: the sudras had it worse and worse. He therefore viewed socialist literature as purely theoretical constructions rather than an expression and product of a definite historical movement. His own theoretical studies in the problems of sociology were restricted to the framework of "pure thought".

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[1] Vivekananda, *On India and Her Problems*, Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, Almora, Himalayas, 1946, p. 39.

The principal propositions of the Utopian theory of the transformation of Indian society which he suggested were as follows.

Depending on the historical conditions, any of the four castes (the priests, the warriors, the merchants, and the workers) may stand at the head of the state. In Vivekananda's view, "according to the prevalence, in greater or lesser degree of the three qualities of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, in man, the four castes, the Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaisya and Sudra are everywhere present at all times and in all civilised societies".[1] It is the corresponding combination of the *gunas* (qualities) that allegedly forms the force which determines the nature of the historical conditions obtaining in any given country. These conditions are, in their turn, regarded as the cause of one caste becoming stronger than another and occupying the dominant position in society. He makes this criterion the basis of periodisation of human history.

Referring to having made "a careful study of the history of the world", Vivekananda asserts that "in conformity to the Law of Nature, the four castes, the Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaisya and Sudra, do in every society, one after another in succession, govern the world".

Each of these forms of government has its advantages and shortcomings.[2]

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[1] Vivekananda, *The Complete Works*, Vol. IV, p. 382.

[2] To explain the role and significance of each caste in the life of society, Vivekananda employs an original literary device. He puts his ideas in the mouth of someone personifying a certain caste. The Brahman (priest) says: "Learning is the power of all powers; that learning is dependent on me. I possess that learning, so the society must follow my bidding..." The Kshatriya said: "But for the power of my sword, where would you be, O Brahman, with all your power of lore?" The Vaisya is

"Among the Chinese, the Sumerians, the Babylonians, the Egyptians, the Chaldeans, the Aryans, the Iranians, the Jews, the Arabs — among all these ancient nations the supreme power of guiding society is, in the first period of their history, in the hands of the Brahman, or the priest..."[1]

Where Brahmans ruled, the countries showed features of terrible exclusiveness. The priests and their families had all the privileges.

The positive side of this form of government, as Vivekananda sees it, is the fact that here "are seen the first advent of civilisation, the first victory of the divine nature over the animal, the first conquest of spirit over matter, and the first manifestation of the divine power, which is potentially present in this very slave of nature, this lump of flesh, to wit, the human body. The priest is the first discriminator of spirit from matter."[2] According to Vivekananda the rule of priests was based on their intellectual rather than physical power. During this period the fundamentals of science were laid and culture was predominantly of an intellectual and literary character.

However, "according to the law of nature [Vivekananda believes], wherever there is an

saying: "You, madmen! what you call the effulgent all-pervading deity is here, in my hand... I am also equally all-powerful..." And finally, he speaks of the Sudras: "Whether the leadership of society be in the hands of those who monopolise learning, or wield the power of riches or arms, the source of its power is always the subject masses. By so much as the class in power severs itself from this source, by so much it is sure to become weak" (*Ibid.*, pp. 398-403).

[1] Vivekananda, *op. cit.*, Vol. IV, pp. 382-383.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 386.

awakening of a new and stronger life, there it tries to conquer and take the place of the old and the decaying. Nature favours the dying out of the unfit and the survival of the fittest."[1] In the course of time, the priesthood became obsolete, it outlived its usefulness and became incapable of governing society. Coming into conflict with other classes, it "has ... been dragged down from its high heavenly position to the lowest abyss of hell": "when society has passed its infant stage and reached its vigorous youthful condition, to clothe it by force with the dress which suited it in its infancy, and keep it bound within narrow limits, then ... it bursts the bonds by virtue of its own strength..."[2] At a certain time, "every society attains its manhood, when a strong conflict ensues between the ruling power and the common people". The life of society, its expansion and civilisation, depend on who will emerge victorious and who the vanquished in this conflict. The victory of the new, progressive forces to a considerable extent revolutionises society, for in this way the form of state government changes. "Such changes revolutionising society have been happening in India again and again, only in this country they have been effected in the name of religion,"[3] notes Vivekananda.

The rule of the warriors (the Kshatriyas) which replaced the dominion of priests was tyrannical and cruel, but the arts and social culture reached their peak at this time.

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 389.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 394.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 395.

The rule of merchants (the Vaisyas) which came later had the advantage that, travelling everywhere, they spread the knowledge accumulated during the rule of the priests and the Kshatriyas. "As during the supremacy of the Brahman and the Kshatriya, there is a centralisation of learning and advancement of civilisation, so the result of the supremacy of the Vaisya is accumulation of wealth... The Vaisya commands the money..."[1]

Of the modern Western nations, in Vivekananda's words, the Vaisyas attained the greatest success in Great Britain. It is owing to the Vaisyas that Britain became economically strong and was able to conquer many countries of the world. "Therefore, the conquest of India by England is not conquest by Jesus or the Bible, as we are often asked to believe... [but] that England, whose warflag is the factory chimney, whose troops are the merchantmen, whose battle-fields are the market-places of the world."[2]

But the supremacy of the Vaisyas is now coming to an end. In the future, the supremacy of the Sudras must emerge. Under it, just distribution of material values will be achieved, equality of the rights of all members of society to ownership of property established, and caste differences obliterated. However, Vivekananda takes a pessimistic view of the prospects for the development of culture at that period. He declares that "ordinary education" will be widespread at that period, but men of genius will be few.

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[1] Vivekananda, *op. cit.*, Vol. IV, pp. 399.
[2] *Ibid.*, 384-385

Thus Vivekananda arrives at a conception of ideal society. "If it is possible to form a state in which the knowledge of the priest period, the culture of the military, the distributive spirit of the commercial and the ideal of equality of the last [the Sudras — V. B.] can all be kept intact, minus their evils, it will be an ideal state."[1] The first three periods, according to Vivekananda, have already occurred in India, and now the time has come for the fourth, during which "New India" will be built.[2]

What was Vivekananda's conception of this construction?

Insisting on a concrete approach to the phenomena of social life,[3] he regarded the elucidation of the actual position of India among the nations and states of the late 19th century as the primary task.

In the first place, he believed India to be the birthplace of culture (mostly spiritual culture) of the whole mankind: all nations of the world are, in this sense, indebted to the peoples of India. "Study the history of the whole world, and you will see that every high ideal you meet with anywhere had its origin in India... The debt which the world owes to our motherland is immense."[4]

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[1] Vivekananda, *The Complete Works*, Vol. VI, p. 343.

[2] Datta gives a rather arbitrary interpretation of this formula for the ideal state. He is even inclined to ascribe to Vivekananda forecasting those social transformations which take place in the socialist countries.

[3] Vivekananda wrote that new India had to be built on the basis of its actual history, that is to say, by making use of the existing social institutions, religion, habits, men's characters, etc.

[4] Vivekananda, *On India and Her Problems*, Advaita Asharama, Calcutta, 1946, p. 39.

On the other hand, modern India, he remarks, stands for almost universal illiteracy, poverty, absolute rule of merciless foreign conquerors, and lack of political rights. "India is no longer a political power; it is an enslaved race. Indians have no say, no voice in their own government; they are three hundred million of slaves — nothing more!"[1]

Now, how could it have happened that such an ancient, talented, and freedom-loving nation fell into servitude and found itself on the brink of annihilation? Wherein lies the reason for that? Who is to blame? We the Indians are to blame, says Vivekananda. The point is that we did not live right in our previous incarnations, and we therefore now mow what we sowed in those past incarnations, according to the law of *karma*. "We, as Vedantists, know for certain that there is no power in the universe to injure us unless we first injure ourselves. Let us blame none, let us blame our own *karma*."[2]

What have the Indian people done to deserve such cruel *karma*? What were their special sins? The main causes, in Vivekananda's view, were perversion of religion, tyranny towards the masses, absence of due education and instruction, underestimating the role of the women, and physical and spiritual weakness and inertia.

With reference to perversion of religion in the past Vivekananda remarks that instead of solving vital social problems with the aid of religion, the leaders of the country, who were Vedantists,

[1] Vivekananda, *My Life and Mission*, Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta, 1957, p. 2.
[2] Vivekananda, *On India and Her Problems*, p. 20.

have discussed, for the last six hundred or seven hundred years, "whether we should drink a glass of water with the right hand or the left, whether the hand should be washed three times or four times", etc., etc. One certainly could not expect much "from men who pass their lives in discussing such momentous questions as these, and writing most learned philosophies on them!"

In Vivekananda's opinion, religion had to be the principal and leading force in implementing all social changes in India. In his words, only religion was capable of rousing the Indian people, for it was not to be forgotten that "the Hindu man drinks religiously, sleeps religiously, walks religiously, marries religiously, robs religiously".[1] "If you want to speak of politics in India, you must speak through the language of religion".[2]

In other words, Vivekananda believed that the oppressed and enslaved position of Indian people, their downtrodden state and general illiteracy, on the one hand, and fanatical religiosity, on the other, did not permit any other approach to their minds and hearts except through religion.

Vivekananda emphasised that he resorted to religion as a means of awakening national consciousness because so far he saw and knew of no other instrument. The goals of socio-political reforms, he said, required their own specific means of attainment, but under the Indian conditions there was no choice. "I have been asked many times, 'Why do you use that old word God?' Because it is the best word for our purpose; you cannot find a better word than that, because all the

[1] Vivekananda, *My Life and Mission*, p. 3.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 8.

hopes, aspirations, and happiness of humanity have been centred in that word. It is impossible now to change the word."[1]

The next cause of the long-suffering *karma* of the Indian society was, according to Vivekānanda, tyranny towards the masses, reducing them to the level of beggarly and half-starving existence without any rights. Down the centuries, he wrote, the rulers and the dominant castes neglected the interests and the lot of the simple people, and that was one of the greatest social evils. "I consider that the great national sin is the neglect of the masses, and that is one of the causes of her downfall."[2]

The rulers and the oppressors, points out the philosopher, increased their material wealth, forgetting that that wealth was created by men. But that was not the only point. It was written in the Upanisads: That which is called wealth is transient. Men are the main thing. So Vivekananda concludes: "Men are more valuable than all the wealth of the world."[3]

Formulating his programme for working among the masses, Vivekananda invokes, as the first point, Ramakrishna's slogan: "Religion is not for empty stomachs". In other words, before awakening spirituality in the heart of the people, one should see to it that the people have enough to eat. And it is not enough to give food to the people; they must be taught to earn that food, they must be given work and the conditions for work. But that is a whole programme of social reforms.

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[1] Vivekananda, *The Complete Works*, Vol. II, p. 210.
[2] Vivekananda, *On India and Her Problems*, p. 23.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 37.

In the last three quarters of the 19th century, Vivekananda said, India was swarming with reforms and reformers, but they were all extremely restricted and did not at all express the radical interests of the people, restricting themselves to propaganda of widow-remarriage, of female emancipation, etc. In principle, Vivekananda was not against reforms, but he believed that India needed a radical reform. In his work *On India and Her Problems* he wrote: "Remember that the nation lives in the cottage. But, alas! nobody ever did anything for them. Our modern reformers are very busy about widow-remarriage. Of course, I am a sympathiser in every reform, but the fate of a nation does not depend upon the number of husbands their widows get, but upon the condition of the masses."[1]

As opposed to the social reformers here mentioned, Vivekananda endeavoured to work out a broad programme of action which would take into account the interests of the entire nation and in the first place of the popular masses. Without support from the lower classes, he said, there could be no question of serious reforms. In his view, however, one could rouse the lower classes in a country like India only through religion, education, and instruction.

Absence of due education and instruction for the popular masses was regarded by Vivekananda as the third principal cause of the harsh *karma* of Indian society. The tragedy of the ordinary Indians lay precisely in that most of them were always illiterate and therefore unable to reveal their genuine human essence. Proceeding from

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[1] Vivekananda, *On India and Her Problems*, p. 72.

this fact, Vivekananda continues, we can realise and formulate the goal of education and instruction. It consists in moulding man as an individual.

However, "education [Vivekananda believes] is not the amount of information that is put into your brain and runs riot there, undigested, all your life. We must have life-building, man-making, character-making, assimilation of ideas. If you have assimilated five ideas and made them your life and character, you have more education than any man who has got by heart a whole library. 'The ass carrying its load of sandal wood knows only the weight and not the value of sandal wood.'" Thus ideological content and strict observance of ideological principles in practical life is the ideal of Vedantist education and instruction.

Vivekananda paid great attention to the choice and elaboration of the means for attaining the ideals. In his opinion, the most widespread and annoying defect in life is that men lay great stress on working out the ideals, on formulating the goals and tasks, but think too little of the means for attaining those ideals.

That is the reason why failure comes in 99 per cent of cases (or, to be more precise, of all the cases of failure, 99 per cent are due to underestimating the means of attaining the goal). "Proper attention to the finishing, strengthening, of the means, is what we need [emphasised Vivekananda]. With the means all right, the end must come. We forget that it is the cause that produces the effect; the effect cannot come by itself... The realisation of the ideal is the effect. The means are the cause: attention to the means, therefore, is the great secret of life."[1]

[1] Vivekananda, *The Complete Works*, Vol. II, p. 1.

Explaining his understanding of the "secret of life' in detail, Vivekananda points out that the means for constructing new India are the popular masses, the means of rousing the masses is education, the means of education is going among the people.

He explains the need for going among the people by these great difficulties in the matter of education which come from the poverty and the material want of the popular masses of India. Supposing, says he, that we find the means to open a school in every village. Will that be a way out? Most likely not, "for the poverty in India is such, that the poor boys would rather go to help their fathers in the fields, or otherwise try to make a living, than come to the school. Now if the mountain does not come to Mahomet, Mahomet must go to the mountain. If the poor boy cannot come to education, education must go to him."[1]

In India, thousands of Saniyasi monks go from village to village preaching religion. That is a good cause, says Vivekananda, and it has to be developed, expanded, and perfected. At the same time he insisted that to meet the requirements of the times, the teaching of "secular things" should also be organised. Saniyasi must go from door to door not only as preachers but as teachers too. "Suppose two of these men go to a village in the evening with a camera, a globe, some maps, etc. They can teach a great deal of astronomy and geography to the ignorant. By telling stories about different nations, they can give the poor a hundred times more information through the ear than they can get in a lifetime through books."[2]

[1] Vivekananda, *The Complete Works*, Vol. IV, p. 309.
[2] *Ibid.*

Emphasising the practical importance of secular education, Vivekananda at the same time expressed alarm at the fact that the "masses are very ignorant about secular things", that is, they do not know the causes of their sorry plight; they do not know that their destiny is in their own hands, and that they have to act; they do not know what they must do to radically improve their living conditions. Hence his appeal to the Saniyasi and the teachers "to go from one part of the country to another, from village to village, and make the people understand that mere sitting about idly won't do any more".

Vivekananda endeavoured to give a definite organisational form to the movement for educating and rousing the masses. With this aim in view he founded societies throughout the country with the aid of the most active of his followers.[1] He called upon them to "work among those young men who can devote heart and soul to this one duty — the duty of raising the masses of India".

Vivekananda paid special attention to work among women. Women, according to him, are a great force in social reform in general.

Vivekananda insistently repeated that India could be roused and rebuilt with the help of small groups of enthusiastic patriots, strong and courageous, with "muscles of iron and nerves of steel, gigantic wills which nothing can resist, which can penetrate into the mysteries and the secrets of the universe, and will accomplish their purpose in any fashion, even

[1] In May 1897, Vivekananda founded a large religious order near Calcutta named the Ramakrishna Mission uniting charity workers, missionaries, and educationalists. At the beginning of the 20th century the order published over a dozen magazines in English and the languages of India.

if it meant going down to the bottom of the ocean and meeting death face to face".[1] "A hundred such and the world becomes revolutionised".[2]

"The weak have no place here, in this life or in any other life," says Vivekananda. "Weakness leads to slavery. Weakness leads to all kinds of misery, physical and mental. Weakness is death." Freedom and independence have to be taken by force and not begged for, because "the beggar is never happy. The beggar only gets a dole, with pity and scorn behind it."[3]

Vivekananda attributed great significance to developing in Indians the feeling of patriotism, of human dignity and national pride. He was particularly alarmed at some Indians' admiration for the capitalist West.

Vivekananda espoused the idea of equality of all people, inspiring Indians' confidence in their ability to perform progressive historical actions.

While living in the United States, he wrote of the great impression produced on him by employment of machines in production ("Everything is machine") and by the high wages of labour. Yet, although the standard of living in the USA is incomparably higher than in India, "the fight between labour and capital is constant",[4] noted Vivekananda.

Highly developed production and material well-being cannot, in Vivekananda's words, by themselves make men happy, if their "spiritual civilisation" is low. But that is exactly the state of affairs in businessmen's America. The men who are only capable of seeing the external aspects of things,

[1] Vivekananda, *On India and Her Problems*, p. 41.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 33.
[3] Vivekananda, *The Complete Works*, Vol. II, p. 4.
[4] Vivekananda, *The Complete Works*, Vol. IV, p. 307.

stated Vivekananda, "are incapable of perceiving that in the spiritual realm India conquers the world".[1]

These are the principal propositions of neo-Vedantist sociology worked out by Vivekananda and applied to India.

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The philosophical and sociological views of Vivekananda can be summed up in the following way. Vivekananda was an adherent of the objective idealist Vedanta philosophy, but he also raised Vedantism to a new and higher level, making some concessions to materialism.

Vivekananda openly advocated fighting for national freedom, consciously linking up the tasks of the national liberation struggle with the guestion of the conditions of the popular masses. Nehru correctly pointed out that "he was ... one of the great founders — if you like, you may use any other word — of the national modern movement of India, and a great number of people who took more or less an active part in the movement at a later date drew their inspiration from Swami Vivekananda. Directly or indirectly he has powerfully influenced the India of today..."[2]

Vivekananda condemned the capitalist system. He believed that India would become socialist, but his socialism was of the petty-bourgeois and Utopian variety. In the words of Marx and Engels, in its positive content "this form of Socialism aspires

[1] Vivekananda, *The Complete Works*, Vol. I, p. 382.

[2] J. Nehru, *Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda*, Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta, 1960, pp. 6-7.

either to restoring the old means of production and of exchange, and with them the old property relations, and the old society, or to cramping the modern means of production and of exchange, within the framework of the old property relations that have been, and were bound to be, exploded by those means".[1]

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The specificity of the historical conditions in India in the second half of the 19th century was determined by such factors as the defeat of the national uprising of the Indian people in 1857-1859, the aggravation of the colonial and feudal oppression, the extremely complicated and difficult process of formation of capitalist relations, spontaneous rebellious actions by the peasant masses, the insignificant numbers and lack of organisation of the working class. All this affected not only the content and form of the development of philosophical and sociological doctrines but also the entire ideology of the Indian national liberation movement as a whole.

The progressive figures of the rising national bourgeoisie (Vivekananda, Dayananda Sarasvati, Syed Ahmad Khan, and others) searched for a way out of the existing situation through reform of the traditional religions (Hinduism, Islam) and the feudal socio-political institutions, using the achievements of modern science and certain experience of Western bourgeois democracy. The reformers offered original commentaries on the

[1] Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party", in: Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, pp. 509-510.

religious canons and dogmas of these religions, defending socio-political views that were essentially bourgeois, and spreading the religious idealist philosophy.

The sociological and philosophical views of the progressive Indian thinkers in the second half of the 19th century, despite their inevitable historical and class limitations, played a positive role in the development of the patriotic and national self-consciousness of the peoples of India, making a considerable contribution to their national liberation struggle.

Section II

THE PHILOSOPHICAL AND SOCIOLOGICAL THOUGHT IN INDIA FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE 20TH CENTURY TO THE END OF WORLD WAR I

Introduction

In the late 19th and early 20th century, India continued to be a British colony. At that time Great Britain used India not only as a source of raw materials and a market but in the first place as a sphere of capital investment.

While in 1899, Britain's profits from foreign trade amounted to £18 million, and from foreign investment, £90-100 million, in 1912 these figures rose to £33 and £176 million respectively. Thus profits from trade rose in that period only by £15 million, whereas the profit from export of capital increased during the same period by £76-86 million.

Analysing the statistics for the year 1914, Palme Dutt noted that "by 1914 the interest and profits on invested capital and direct tribute considerably exceeded the total of trading, manufacturing and shipping profits out of India. *The finance-capitalist exploitation of India had become the dominant character in the twentieth century.*"[1]

This circumstance had a decisive effect on the position and historical destinies of all the classes of Indian society.

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[1] R. Palme Dutt, *India Today*, Victor Gollancz Ltd., London, 1940, p. 145.

The enormous burden of colonial and feudal exploitation was shouldered by Indian peasantry. The survivals of feudalism and the extremely slow development of capitalism in agriculture led to the fact that stratification of the peasantry followed the most painful path of non-proletarian impoverishment.

The peasant cultivator, if he had not yet fallen into the ranks of the landless proletariat, suffered from excessive requisitions and extortion. A large portion of the meagre returns he was able to obtain with inadequate instruments from his small plot of land, even though already too small for the barest subsistence needs of the peasant and his family, had to be given away to the government as taxes, to the landlord as rent, and to the moneylender as loan repayment.

The condition of the working class of India deteriorated greatly. Throughout the working day (that is, 13 to 15 and sometimes 17 hours), workers stood at their machines in the tropical heat of India in badly ventilated rooms, unprotected from the machines by any railings. Their housing was just as unbearable as the conditions of work at the factories. The workers' families were huddled together in tiny stuffy cells, amidst decaying refuse and gutters. All of this brought about high disease and mortality rates, particularly among children.

Under the colonial structure of the economy, only two ways of increasing industrial profits were open to the Indian national bourgeoisie: on the one hand, greater exploitation of workers, and on the other, decreasing the share of profits expropriated by the imperialists from the national industry. For this reason, any pressure from the colonialists aimed

at taking away more profits of the national bourgeoisie almost immediately increased the pressure on the working class; vice versa, the growing resistance of the working class compelled the national bourgeoisie to defend its economic interests from the encroachments of the British capital.

Thus even the purely economic struggle of the Indian working class at the national enterprises was, objectively, anti-imperialist in nature, for it held in check, in a certain measure, the attacks of imperialism against the national industry, aggravating the contradictions between the Indian bourgeoisie and the British imperialists.

Indian big business desired cooperation with the British capital. But this cooperation was unequal and held no promise for the junior partner, for the colonialists practically disregarded the latter's interests. Moreover, exploiting India's political, economic, and technical dependence, they intentionally slowed down the development of its national industry. India's middle and petty bourgeoisie, on the other hand, had no common interests with the British capital: from its very inception it had to wage a hard competitive struggle against British imports.

Objectively, colonialism was the main enemy of all the classes of Indian society at the time. This did not mean, of course, that all these classes fought together against colonialism. On the contrary, increased imperialist exploitation aggravated contradictions between them that often erupted in open conflict. Nevertheless the contradiction between the trend towards India's independent development and the colonial dominance of British imperialism remained the main contradiction that had to be resolved before any of the social problems within the country were satisfactorily solved.

The growing acuteness of the main contradiction was expressed in the rapid growth of the national liberation movement. At that time, the popular movement assumed great scope, attaining a heretofore unknown level of organisation and evincing its democratic nature; all of this marked the emergence of a mighty all-India movement.

Lenin called the liberation movement in the Oriental countries in the first decade of the 20th century a revolutionary democratic movement. The bourgeoisie went along with the proletariat and the broad peasant masses. "The bourgeoisie there is *as yet* siding with the people against reaction,"[1] emphasised Lenin.

The national liberation movement in India at the time was directed by the Indian National Congress party, in particular by its left wing headed by the outstanding political figure Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1856-1920).

The principal slogans of the national liberation movement in India were *swaraj* (home rule; political independence); *swadeshi* (home production; economic independence); national education (founding schools and higher educational establishments independent of the British authorities) and boycott of British goods.

The rise and development of the national liberation movement in India was greatly influenced by the Russia revolution of 1905.

In 1905-1908, the *swadeshi* movement[2] became

[1] V. I. Lenin, "Backward Europe and Advanced Asia", *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1973, pp. 99-100.

[2] That is the term by which the national liberation movement in India in the first decade of the 20th century is referred to in Indian historical literature.

more vigorous and reached its peak. The immediate stimulus for that was the partition of Bengal.[1] This measure taken by the colonialists, who acted on the "divide and rule" principle here, caused a great wave of protest. Between November 1903 and October 1905, that is, between the moment the government announced its intention and the time when the division was actually implemented, more than two thousand meetings took place in both parts of the divided province in which from 500 to 50 thousand Hindus and Moslems participated.

The idea of armed struggle for the overthrow of foreign domination was taking root in the minds of Indian patriots and democrats. Tilak and his followers sharply criticised the "courageous inactivity" of the Indian liberals (Gokhale, Naoroji, and others) with their petitions and appeals to the colonialists. Ultimately, Tilak wrote, the sword would have to be drawn. In many provinces (Maharashtra, Bengal, Punjab, and others) numerous "secret societies" sprang up — underground organisations whose goal was the preparation of an armed uprising.

At that time, the despotism of the British government was often compared with that of the Russian Tsar. The activities of Russian revolutionaries evoked great interest, and the history of *Narodnaya Volya* and its struggle against the tsarist regime were studied. The news of the military defeats of the tsarist government in the war with Japan

[1] To weaken the national movement through fanning the religious strife between Hindus and Moslems, the British authorities divided Bengal into two independent provinces in 1905. The division was carried out on religious lines, that is to say, in such a way that the population of one province were mostly Hindus and of the other, Moslems.

was greeted with enthusiasm, and the stories about them reached even the most remote villages. Maxim Gorky, the famous Russian writer said at the time: "See how fast the Indian movement for national freedom and against Britain's cruel guardianship is growing."

Emigré Indians living in Europe took an active part in the struggle for freedom and independence of their country. Indian émigrés were mostly members of the well-to-do classes, the middle and, partly, petty bourgeoisie; they were students, doctors, lawyers, and so on, but not workers.

On the eve of the First World War, the Indian revolutionary émigrés in Europe were led by Bhikaji Kama. Not only did she take an active part in publishing abroad the revolutionary newspaper *Bande Mataram*, but she also kept up strong ties with India, managed the sending of illegal literature to India and headed the activities of revolutionary émigrés in Europe and America. Mme B. R. Kama was well read in Marxist literature and displayed a lively interest in the revolutionary events in Russia, particularly the 1905-1907 revolution, and in the role of the working class in the movement. She held in high esteem the work of Maxim Gorky. She said of his *Song of the Falcon* that that poem was better than any revolutionary leaflet.

Revolutionary Indian émigrés enthusiastically supported the idea of an armed uprising.

Among the progressive young Indians living at the time in Great Britain was Jawaharlal Nehru. He recalls in his *Autobiography*: "Almost without an exception we were Tilakites or Extremists, as the new party was called in India."[1] The

[1] J. Nehru, *An Autobiography*, Allied Publishers, Bombay, 1962, p. 21.

Extremists rejected the possibility of a successful armed revolt against British rule. They believed a general boycott of everything that was British and terrorist acts against British officials to be the most effective weapons.

The right wing of the emigration were the ideologues of bourgeois liberalism. Their head was Shyamaji Krishnavarma. He published the journal *Indian Sociologist* in Paris, whose main theme was denunciation of the predatory policies of the British and appeals for resistance which was, however, taken in a very limited sense, as peaceful actions against colonialism. In his philosophical and sociological views Krishnavarma was a feeble follower of the English positivism, stating openly that all his arguments were derived from Spencer.

The reactionary camp in the ideological struggle was represented by the servants of the colonialists, of the Indian feudals and the bourgeoisie collaborating with the British. The philosophers belonging to the conservative upper crust of the Indian intelligentsia defended the most reactionary aspects of the Vedanta, the Yoga, and other systems of idealistic philosophy.

Jiddu Krishnamurti, Brahmana Chatterjee, and others were the typical representatives of the reactionary camp in Indian philosophy. In an attempt to distract their compatriots from the struggle for their earthly interests, they founded their philosophy on the religious mystical proposition that the goal of man's life was comprehending God. Starting from this premise, they insisted on mastering the wisdom of the Hindu doctrines of *karma*, reincarnation, immortality of the soul, Yoga, etc., etc., preaching the ideas of self-denial and asceticism. Particularly harmful was their propaganda of indif-

ference to secular progress — scientific discoveries and inventions.

Praising the "civilising" mission of the colonialists, these philosophers contributed to the spreading in India of various trends of the idealist philosophy of the imperialist West, in particular, of F. H. Bradley's absolute idealism, W. James' pragmatism, H. Bergson's intuitionism, etc. Western bourgeois ideologues, in their turn, spread the view that religion and mysticism, allegedly, express the true spirit of the Indian people.

Progressive Indian scientists, on the other hand, gradually developed science and technology. In 1897, Jagadis Chandra Bose made an outstanding discovery in botany, which was taken by the progressive Indian public as evidence of the fact that science is by no means a monopoly of the Europeans. In 1902, Prafulla Chandra Roy wrote the history of the development of Indian chemistry. In 1911, the Indian Institute of Science was founded at Bangalore for doing research in physics, chemistry, etc. In 1914, the Indian Science Congress Association was founded, whose task was organisation and encouragement of research work as well as propaganda of scientific knowledge.

These were the main features of the political and ideological struggle in Indian society in the first two decades of the 20th century — the time of Asia's awakening.

Chapter 1. BAL GANGADHAR TILAK

Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1856-1920) was an outstanding figure in the national liberation movement in India in the last quarter of the 19th and early 20th century. In the progressive circles of the Indian public he was referred to as Lokamanya (Respected by the People).

Tilak was born in a not very rich Brahman family. His father was a teacher of Sanskrit and mathematics at a school. His mother had a sound knowledge of the Vedic literature. The parents brought up their son in the progressive traditions of the Maratha people, in the spirit of the struggle for freedom and independence.

Tilak's whole social and political life and activity may be divided into three main stages.

The first stage (1879-1890) was a period of the formation of Tilak's radical political views and general world outlook. At the time, there was no organised political movement in India, and the modern methods of political struggle were in a state of initial development. By 1879, the country had recovered from the shattering defeat of 1857, and an armed uprising broke out in Maharashtra, which, however, did not yield any results. Severe famine took a heavy toll of human lives. The British authorities were but timidly and obliquely criticised in petty complaints about administration.

In these years, Tilak and his ideological allies

carried out a number of educational, propagandist, and enlightenment actions: they founded a secondary school at Poona, the historical and cultural centre of Maharashtra, the Deccan Education Society, and, finally, a higher school of the university type, all of them independent of the official British establishments.

In 1881 Tilak started the publication of two weeklies, *Mahratta* in English (for the more educated circles of society) and *Kesari* in Marathi (for the broad masses). These publications were the first to start the courageous struggle for independence. Here Tilak indefatigably denounced the evils of foreign domination, calling on his compatriots not to trust those Indian leaders who were ready to serve the British government in exchange for privileges. In July 1882, Tilak was sentenced to four months' imprisonment for his publicistic articles that outraged the colonialists.

At that stage, Tilak's views were as yet rather contradictory and vacillating. Recognising in principle the need for uncompromising struggle for political liberation of India, Tilak was at the same time a convinced and consistent adherent of unity of action and thus condoned the policy of collaboration with the British authorities, doing nothing to dissociate himself from the moderate wing of the Indian national movement. If one takes into account the undeveloped state of class antagonisms in the young bourgeois society of India, as well as its colonial dependence which, to a varying degree, affected all her social classes, Tilak's vacillation may be viewed as justified to an extent. But it inevitably led to retreating from fundamentally important positions, ultimately doing harm to the liberation struggle.

The second stage (1891-1897) is marked by Tilak's decisive stand against moderate nationalism headed by such politically experienced leaders as Mahadeo Govind Ranade, Gopal Krishna Gokhale and others. The objective cause of Tilak's breakaway from the moderates was the growth of the spontaneous discontent of the masses which swept through nearly all India in the late 1880s and early 1890s. The moderates pinned their hopes on social reforms, believing them to be a premise for political independence. Tilak said that the social reforms practically meant house-reforms: "You can well beat the resonant drum of house-reform as you say. But what would you say to a man who is homeless? Give them homes and then ask them to reform."[1] Tilak and his coevals and followers (Lala Lajpat Rai of Punjab, Bepin Chandra Pal and Aurobindo Ghose of Bengal, and others) started an active political struggle against the colonial regime, widely using the means and methods intended to involve the broad popular masses in the struggle.

During *the third stage* (1898-1908) Tilak's activity reaches its climax. As Jawaharlal Nehru aptly put it, Tilak became in those years a true symbol of the new era, the principal leader of the democratic wing in the national movement not only in Maharashtra but in India as a whole.

Apart from numerous publicistic articles and other items, Tilak wrote a number of fundamental studies of historical and philosophical nature.

In his early work *Orion, Studies in the Antiquity of the Vedas*, Tilak endeavoured to prove that the

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[1] Quoted in: N. G. Kelkar, *Life and Times of Lokamanya Tilak*, S. Canesan, publisher, Madras, 1928, pp.525-526, Appendix 1.

Rig Veda was compiled some 4,500 years before the Christian Era. He substantiated this view by astronomical calculations based on Sanskrit texts. Tilak's first work won recognition among scholars, and the author himself became known as an expert in oriental teachings.

Tilak's next major work, *Arctic, the Home of the Vedas* (1898) is also devoted to the Vedas; it became known as a most original work among Sanskritologists.

In July 1908, Tilak was again arrested and banished for to six years of banishment to Burma, to the prison-house in Mandalay. The charges against him were based on two of his articles in the *Kesari* criticising the partition of Bengal and the colonial authorities' reprisals. Accusing Tilak of terrorism, the British authorities actually wished to remove from the political scene an active fighter for the country's liberation.

The news of Tilak's imprisonment caused a wave of indignation among the population of Bombay. On July 23, 1908, markets and shops were closed, pupils refused to attend schools, workers mounted protest demonstrations. According to official reports, 14 persons were killed and 30 wounded during the six-day strike; unofficial figures were much higher: 30 dead and 100 wounded. The Indian people's reaction to Tilak's imprisonment found a broad response far beyond the borders of India. Lenin wrote at the time: "But in India the street is beginning to stand up for *its* writers and political leaders. The infamous sentence pronounced by the British jackals on the Indian democrat Tilak...this revenge against a democrat by the lackeys of the money-bag evoked street demonstrations and a strike in Bombay. In India, too, the proletariat has

already developed to conscious political mass struggle."[1]

Tilak spent six years in a single cell at the Mandalay prison-house. There he studied the philosophical writings of Indian and European scholars, including Voltaire, Kant and Hegel, and learned German and French. He also wrote a book, *Gita-Rahasya*, in which he endeavoured to prove that the *Bhagavad-Gita*, the Hindus' sacred book, did not teach escape from life, as some religious philosophers asserted, but on the contrary called for active struggle in a righteous cause, against social evil.

In the book *Gita-Rahasya* Tilak expounded his philosophical views in the most complete and systematic form.

Of all the Yogas[2] or, better say, Yogic precepts contained in the *Bhagavad-Gita*, Tilak lays principal emphasis on The Karma-Yoga, the Yoga of action and struggle.

This philosophy, as Tilak understood it, when applied to the practice of the national liberation movement, meant that liberation from the colonial bondage and solution of the political and economic problems was only possible through active involvement of the *entire* Indian people; that political struggle could not be a prerogative of the well-to-do classes only; that it had to involve *all* the ordinary people; and that the "educated upper crust" (the national bourgeoisie was meant here, in the first place) had to understand that its own salvation

[1] V. I. Lenin, "Inflammable Material in World Politics", *Collected Works*, Vol. 15, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1982, p. 184.

[2] The Yoga of refraining from action, the Yoga of self-restraint, the Yoga of worshipful love, etc.

depended on the salvation of the people.

That was Tilak's programme for all the Indians, that is, for all the classes of Indian society.

Tilak's greatness lies, among other things, in the fact that through his speeches and writings he skilfully inculcated in the consciousness of all the Indians the idea of national unity and outlined, from these positions, a revolutionary democratic solution to the vital problems of the national liberation struggle. He believed that there was only one cure for the peoples of India, and that cure was political power. It had to be taken by the people. Without it, Indian industry could not develop, and the young people could not receive the education they needed so badly. Without settling the question of political power, neither social reforms nor the material well-being of the people could be ensured.

According to Tilak, power could be seized and complete freedom from British domination of India could be attained only through violence, but that violence was not to be directed against individuals (terrorist acts by individual patriots[1]) — it had to be mass violence in the form of an armed uprising of the entire Indian people. At the same time Tilak emphasised that any action by the people could only be successful if the people were sufficiently organised and armed.

Tilak equated the seizure of power and driving out the colonialists with a social revolution. He

[1] Tilak recognised for a long time acts of individual terror, assassinations of high British officials as one of the instruments of struggle, but in the years of his political maturity he called them absurd actions which could not lead to the desired goal, for as soon as one official was eliminated, another would come in his place, and if one liquidated the latter, his place would be taken by a third.

wrote that the time was coming for action intended to establish harmony. That action was the revolution. The time for a revolution was not yet ripe in India, but it would come in the future.

Tilak made careful and vigorous preparations for the revolution he expected. However, being an idealist in his view of social phenomena, he could have no clear and distinct idea about the nature and motive forces of this revolution, making grave mistakes in his practical actions. For example, endeavouring to attract to his side the broad popular masses, to take the lower classes by the hand, as he was wont to put it, Tilak appealed to their religious feelings rather than class consciousness. In this, he was guided by a fact that stood out quite clearly — the enormous significance of religion in the life of the Indian people. Any Indian, literate or illiterate, rich or poor, knows to some extent the dogmas of Hinduism and some tales and parables from the epics; moreover, he arranges his private life and social conduct in accordance with the precepts of these works. Therefore any appeal for action addressed to Indians must not, according to Tilak, contradict their religious feeling.

Tilak himself set an example in using such tactics. At a festival in honour of the people's hero Shivaji he said that the laws binding society are meant for the ordinary people. Great men are above the principles of common morality. Such principles lack scope to reach the feet of the great men. Did Shivaji commit a sin in murdering Afzal-Khan? An answer to this question could be found in the *Mahabharata* itself. The revered Krishna teaches us in the *Bhagavad-Gita* to kill even our teachers and our kin. No guilt accrues to a man who

performs a deed unmotivated by the desire to enjoy the fruit of his action. The venerable Maharaja Shivaji did nothing for private gain. He killed Afzal-Khan with the best of intentions, to do good to others. If robbers penetrate our house and we lack the strength to drive them out, we must, without any hesitation, lock the door behind them and burn them alive. God never gave the *mlechchhas*[1] any letters patent inscribed on copper to the kingdom of Hindustan. The Maharaja desired to drive them away from his native land; he committed no sin, as he did not strive to get something that belonged to others.

Quite a definite political conclusion followed from this speech, religious and philosophical in its form: action, and nothing but action ignoring the colonialists' reactionary laws and dictated by the morality and needs of the national liberation struggle, could save the native land from physical and moral death and open the way to India's true liberation.

A most general and brief formulation of Tilak's philosophy would be this: his philosophy is the philosophy of action. It had better be called traditionally — Karma-Yoga, to retain the specific features of this philosophy in its very name. The requirement of taking the terminology of Indian philosophy into account, as we have noted in the previous chapters, is prompted by the nature of its specific content.

We now face this question: will it not be a mistake to call Karma-Yoga (as interpreted by Tilak) the philosophical foundation of revolutionary democracy in India?

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[1] Barbarians, foreigners, infidels.

The difficulties in the way of settling this question are of objective nature. Indeed, on the one hand Tilak and his followers were oriented towards the people, the lower classes who had the last and decisive say in the struggle for the liberation of India from colonialist oppression. On the other hand, the people in their view were children who had to be led by the hand. Their leaders would be the educated upper classes or, to be more precise, the intellectuals.

Failure to understand the true role of the popular masses in history led Tilak and his followers to a tactical error. Instead of creating a political party out of the best members of the working class and the poorest peasants, a party that could work out a concrete programme for the national liberation struggle, that could organise and inspire the people and lead them in the battle for carrying out that programme, they expended their strength in appeals for spiritual remoulding of man (of all Indians) and in organising this remoulding according to the principle: "first in the heart and then in the being of the world".

This error was to some extent or other characteristic of almost all the progressive thinkers of India in the second half of the 19th and early 20th century. We have indicated this error in the chapter on Vivekananda's philosophy. Aurobindo Ghose, whose philosophical views are considered in the next chapter, also committed this error.

Chapter 2. AUROBINDO GHOSE

1. Integral Philosophy

Aurobindo Ghose (1873-1950) was a major objective idealist philosopher and an outstanding leader of the national liberation movement in India in the late 19th and early 20th century. His philosophical teaching came to be known as the integral Vedanta.[1] There are three principal currents within the Indian philosophical system of the Vedanta — the so-called unrestricted monism (*advaita*), the restricted monism (*vishishtadvaita*), and pluralism, or dualism (*dvaita*). These trends, however, were one-sided, in Aurobindo Yhose's view, for materialism and idealism, rationalism and mysticism, monism and pluralism appeared in them as opposites in a state of implacable conflicts. In the integral Vedanta, in Ghose's opinion, all these opposites are fully reconciled.

In explaining his basic philosophical assumptions, Aurobindo Ghose pointed out that, like all Vedantists, he recognised Brahman as the primary basis of all that is. His differences with the other Vedantists begin with the answer to the question: what is Brahman and what are the relations between Brahman on the one hand and reason on the other.[2]

[1] It is sometimes referred to as "integral idealism", "the integral Yoga", or "integralism".

[2] In the Vedanta philosophical system, "matter" traditionally means the inorganic world; "life", the organic world; "reason", consciousness, thinking, which is regarded as a definite objective essence independent of matter, an attribute of Brahman rather than as the product of matter (brain).

The principal shortcoming of all the previous forms of the Vedanta, according to Ghose, lay in the fact that they either regarded Brahman as divorced from matter, life, and reason or they opposed Brahman to the latter as the true being to untrue and illusory being, or else the essence of Brahman was restricted to one of its attributes.

In accordance with the teaching of the Upanisads and the *Bhagavad-Gita*, Ghose recognised the existence of three intimately connected and equally real forms of Brahman: the indefinite Brahman (*nirguna Brahman*), the definite Brahman (*saguna Brahman*) and Brahman as the spirit, as absolute consciousness, as soul (*atman*). There is only one Brahman proper — the indefinite Brahman that is the substance. As substance, "Brahman is the One besides whom there is nothing else existent." It exists alone in itself and is manifested through itself, that is, it does not need any other thing to manifest its existence. It is neither material nor ideal, and the categories of space, time, motion, quantity, quality, cause, etc., are inapplicable to it. It is above all that, the only thing that we can say of it is that it exists, that is, we can state its being.

The essence of Brahman cannot be expressed or defined by pointing to some concrete object or phenomenon, for it is neither this thing nor that one nor yet a third one, and so on *ad infinitum (neti, neti)*, but, despite the fact that all is Brahman, we cannot fix it to any concrete thing even through an infinite series: it is this, it is that (*iti, iti*), etc.

Brahman is the absolute which "cannot be summed up in any quantity or quantities, it cannot be composed of any quality or combination of qualities. It is not an aggregate of forms or a formal substratum of forms. If all forms, quantities, qualities were to disappear, this would remain. Existence without quantity, without quality, without form is not only conceivable, but it is the one thing we can conceive behind these phenomena."[1] Brahman as the absolute, as pure existence, is a fact rather than mere concept, it is the basis of reality: everything depends on it, while it does not depend on anything.

The reality of Brahman and its essence reveal their being in two principal forms or attributes, matter and spirit. The material Brahman is the definite Brahman, the material cause of the world which evokes all things. The spiritual Brahman is absolute consciousness, absolute reason, absolute soul. Both of these attributes penetrate and permeate each other to the extent that the entire phenomenal world, the world of individual things and phenomena, is lighted from inside by consciousness, that is to say, consciousness is inherent in any object or phenomenon of nature, to some degree or other.

Aurobindo Ghose believed that those Vedantists and other philosophers who viewed one of Brahman's attributes as the essence of all that is, fell into extremes — materialism or idealism. In rejecting the spirit, modern materialists, in Ghose's opinion, reason in approximately the same way as the ancient Indian materialist Bhrigu[2]: "Matter is the Eternal, for from Matter all beings are born and by Matter all beings exist and to Matter all beings depart and return."[1] However, speaking against materialism in general, Ghose actually had in mind vulgar materialists who identified matter and consciousness.[2] Modern idealists in his view behave somewhat like Indian ascetics: they ignore matter as mechanical illusion and refuse to believe that it is true. "In Europe and in India, respectively [wrote Ghose] the negation of the materialist and the refusal of the ascetic have sought to assert themselves as the sole truth and to dominate the conception of Life."[3] And Ghose was convinced that truth lay in "the third", in integralism, whose philosophical credo was this: matter ("a mechanical unintelligent substance") and consciousness ("pure Spirit") are inseparably connected as two aspects of a single whole. Ghose expressed the fear that "if we assert only pure Spirit and a mechanical unintelligent substance or energy, calling one God or Soul and the other Nature, the inevitable end will be that we shall either deny God or else turn from Nature". Under the guise of fighting "one-sidedness", Aurobindo Ghose tried to eliminate the fundamental problem of philosophy, rising above materialism and idealism and passing off his integral Vedanta as the third line in philosophy, as a doctrine which synthesises all the particular viewpoints.

Actually, Ghose preferred the objective idealist solution of the fundamental question of philosophy. His indefinite Brahman is nothing but the absolute

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[1] Aurobindo Ghose, *The Life Divine*, Arya Publishing House, Calcutta, 1947, Vol. I, p. 96.

[2] Bhrigu — one of the great *rishis* (wise men) of the Vedic period. Some of his materialistic ideas are recorded in the Vedic hymns. According to some data, he was a legislator, astronomer and doctor.

[1] Aurobindo Ghose, *Op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 549.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 101-113.

[3] Aurobindo Ghose, *Op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 11.

spirit, God that "pre-exists before the world can come into being". All objects and phenomena of nature exist in God, which is the cause of their existence. "God comes out from one form of things only to enter into another."[1] All things come from God (Brahman), they are supported by Brahman and dissolve in it. Only through God does nature acquire the ability for manifesting itself simultaneously in many properties and qualities, for being harmonious and developing according to laws.

Ghose's entire integralist system is nothing more than an original interpretation and description of well-known Vedantist propositions concerning the subordination, mutual transitions and links between Brahman, its attributes, and the phenomenal world. To describe the relations between Brahman and its attributes, Ghose used the traditional Hinduist formula *sat — chit — ananda*, that is, being — consciousness — bliss. In other words, the only properties of Brahman are these: (1) He is. (2) He knows. (3) He is full of bliss.

The category of bliss is intended to answer this question: "Why should Brahman, perfect, absolute, infinite, needing nothing, desiring nothing, at all throw out force of consciousness to create in itself these worlds of forms?" The reason is, Ghose explained, that Brahman's existence as substance is "conscious existence". But consciousness assumes bliss: "Absoluteness of conscious existence is illimitable bliss of conscious existence; the two are only different phrases for the same thing."[2] But Brahman's self-enjoyment is not limited to silent and motionless possession of absolute being. Being in a state of bliss, Brahman gives an impetus to the emergence of the phenomenal world.

Thus Ananda (bliss, delight) is existence, the secret of creation, the root of birth, and that to which all creations return. Referring to the Upanisads, Ghose wrote: "From Ananda all existences are born, by Ananda they remain in being and increase, to Ananda they depart." Ananda is the universal cause inherent in Brahman, owing to which Brahman generates out of himself, through emanation, all that is in space and time.

What is this spatio-temporal existence? What processes occur in it? Is there a law and a goal of movement and development in the individual objects and phenomena? What is the ultimate destiny of all that is? Those were the questions which Aurobindo Ghose answered in expounding his philosophical system.

All that is is divided into two main series: the world of ideal (spiritual, conscious, reasonable) phenomena; the world of material objects or phenomena.

Matter and consciousness are always interconnected both at the level of Brahman's two attributes and in any elementary object or phenomenon of the universe, whether animate or inanimate. The difference existing here is equivalent to the difference between part and whole: consciousness as an attribute is absolute consciousness (the whole), while an individual object contains only a particle of that absolute.[1]

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[1] Aurobindo Ghose, "Thoughts and Glimpses", in: Sri Aurobindo, *Supramental Manifestation and Other Writings*, Vol. 16, Birth Centenary Library, All India Press, Pondicherry, 1971, p. 381.

[2] Aurobindo Ghose, *The Life Divine*, Vol. I, p. 115.

[1] It is important to note that it is not the question of the degree of consciousness of matter here, for, according to Ghose,

The relation between matter and consciousness constituting a given thing is regarded by Ghose as the relation between form and content: "Spirit is the soul and reality of that which we sense as Matter, Matter is a form and body of that which we realise as Spirit."[1]

Thus, according to Ghose, all that exists in space and time is an endless number of qualities, forms, and constructions out of matter and consciousness. These existences are named the phenomenal world or nature. The essence of the world is eternal flow. Everything flows out of Brahman and everything returns to Brahman. There are no other ways. The way out of Brahman is regarded as the immersion of higher being in the nature of lower being. A return to Brahman is regarded as lower being ascending to the nature of the higher being. The subject of motion is spirit: "A spiritual evolution, an evolution of consciousness in Matter ... is then the keynote, the central significant motive of the terrestrial existence."[2]

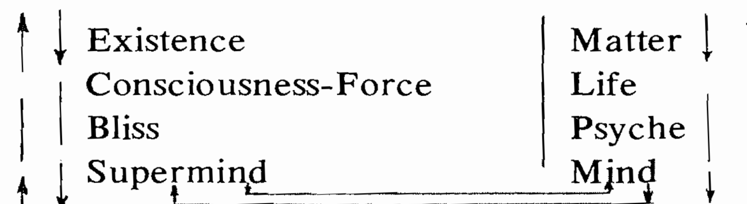
Referring to Darwinism, Aurobindo Ghose wrote that science now affirms an evolutionary terrestrial existence, but the theory of spiritual evolution is not identical with the scientific theory of evolution, for "if the facts with which Science deals are reliable, the generalisations it hazards are shortlived".[3] Integralism claims the discovery of eternal truths.

It was from this angle that Ghose considered hu-

in none of its forms, the human mind included, can matter reason; it is rather a question of the quantity of objective consciousness present in a given object.

[1] Aurobindo Ghose, *The Life Divine*, Vol. I, p. 288.
[2] *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 648.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 653.

man life and life in general. He believed that our existence was a kind of refraction of the divine existence in inverted order, that is, return (ascent) to Brahman. The scheme of refraction in both directions suggested by Ghose is this:



This scheme is intended to explain that "the Divine descends from pure existence through the play of Consciousness-Force and Bliss and the creative medium of Supermind into cosmic being; we ascend from Matter through developing life, soul and mind and the illuminating medium of supermind towards the divine being"[1]. At the juncture of the two processes, where the divine being has gone down to the supermind, while we have risen from matter to the level of the mind, there is a kind of veil concealing the substance. "The rending of the veil [wrote Ghose] is the condition of the divine life in humanity; for by that rending, by the illumining descent of the higher into the nature of the lower being and the forceful ascent of the lower being into the nature of the higher, mind can recover its divine light in the all-comprehending supermind, the soul realise its divine self in the all-possessing all-blissful Ananda, life repossesses its divine power in the play of omnipotent Consciousness-Force and Matter open to its divine liberty as a form of the divine Existence."[2]

[1] Aurobindo Ghose, *Op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 333.
[2] *Ibid.*

In this passage Ghose answers the traditional "question of questions" in Indian idealist philosophy formulated already in the Katha-Upanisad: what will be "after"? It is the question of what happens to man after his death. Some insist, it is written in the Katha-Upanisad, that man after death continues to exist, while others say that the body decomposes and there is nothing left of the man. Here two diametrically opposed positions are presented, the religious idealist and the materialist one. Ghose took up the former position. He developed the ideas recorded in the following *slokas*:

"...10. Whatever is here in this world is also there, in the Brahman and whatever is there is likewise here. One who sees difference here undergoes various births and deaths."[1]

In other words, life and death are two phases of a single whole. The transition from one phase to another, from the terrestrial world to the hereafter and back, is a purely quantitative process of increasing or decreasing ("evolution", to use Ghose's term). Only he who believes that there is a qualitative difference between life and death "undergoes various births and deaths". In reality, according to the Katha-Upanisad, what occurs is transition from one life to another.

"What were we before birth and what are we after death, are the questions," emphasised Aurobindo Ghose. The philosophers of the past ages, Samkara (8th century), Ramanuja (12th century), Ramakrishna (19th century) answered these questions in an unsatisfactory manner. Their common defect, in Ghose's view, was absence of an "integral" approach to the phenomena of the world and to the

[1] *Nine Principal Upanisads*, II, I.10, p. 94.

relations between these phenomena and their substance or Brahman.

According to Ghose, the integral approach assumes that everything that is, including the phenomenal world (matter or nature) should be regarded as objective reality, that is, reality independent of the human consciousness, which is born out of Brahman according to law and returns to Brahman according to law, too. However, Samkara believed, for instance, that matter is an illusion dreamt by Brahman. In other words, he refused to recognise matter as actually existing. This one-sidedness of Samkara, just as of many other Vedantists, precluded the possibility of correctly answering the question: what will be "after". The view that that which takes place "in this world" is illusory blocks the path to genuine knowledge of what happens in the hereafter, for, if one takes Samkara's standpoint, the philosopher breaks all the threads linking this world to the hereafter, and the knowledge of Brahman's essence is becoming practically impossible. But it is the knowledge of Brahman (and here the Vedantists of all trends concur) that is the goal and purpose of man's life.

In presenting his theory of knowledge, Aurobindo Ghose proceeded from the general Vedantist proposition that man is a synthesis of the universe (or the universe in miniature): he comprises the physical matter of the mineral kingdom, the vital force of the vegetable, the animal's ability to feel and desire, the elementary intellect inherent in the higher animals, and, finally, the soul which alone makes the real man. Thus ignoring man's social essence, Ghose does not rise above the traditional Vedanta, which considers everything that is, man included, as a mixture of the particles of the descended Brahman. It is

important to note that in listing all elements of which the universe and man consist, he assumed that each form of the movement of matter (the universe) exists in isolation and contains an independent source of motion as a special force. It follows that man is not only a combination of the elements of the universe but also a kind of node formed by the interweaving and action of various forces. The principal forces are the spiritual (the soul) and the material one (*prana*).

"A Consciousness-Force, everywhere inherent in Existence, acting even when concealed [wrote Ghose], is the creator of the worlds, the occult secret of Nature."[1]

Prana is the universal cosmic, astral vital force or energy acting in everything that is, "from amoeba to man". Because of the presence of *prana*, each organism is what it is, that is to say, it becomes what it is; where an organism lacks the necessary quantity of *prana*, it loses its quality, it perishes and disintegrates.

Man receives or obtains *prana* mainly through food, water, and air. Ghose borrowed the methods of taking food, drink, and of breathing from the Yogins. Maintaining fitness, suitable physical training of the organism and performance of definite ritual postures (*asanas*) form part of the process of cognition as an absolutely necessary component. Man's organism is merely the seat of spiritual force, and the organism's health is the condition for the cognitive activity of that force.

Aurobindo Ghose saw the process of cognition as man's consistent immersion in his spiritual essence, revealing "the divine content" in himself. He wrote:

[1] Aurobindo Ghose, *The Life Divine*, Vol. II, p. 1.

"To know we have to go within ourselves and see with an inner knowledge."[1] It is only through knowledge of oneself that man learns the true essence of the objects of the surrounding world, for underlying man and everything that surrounds him is Brahman. Only through knowledge of oneself can man rise to the level of Brahman, merging with it and thus attaining the "life divine". "All spiritual life is in its principle a growth into divine living."[2]

But who is it that learns? Who in general can have knowledge? The subject of cognition is, properly speaking, only one — a particle of Brahman, asserted Ghose. The soul has consciousness, it has reason which is a specific action of divine consciousness. Through reason, the soul must not only realise that it is a particle of divinity, of Brahman descending because of "bliss" to the phenomenal world and endeavouring to return to itself, but it must actively facilitate that return.

Ghose recognises the Vedantist teaching of reincarnation of the human soul. The essence of that teaching is that man periodically returns to the earth in new incarnations, until he fully develops the latent kernels of divine qualities through various experiences (religious experiences, the experiences of the Yoga, etc.).

According to the teaching of reincarnation, man after death remains the same, with all his passions and desires, being merely deprived of his physical integument. In other words, those whom we call dead, live, they exist, but only in a finer form inaccessible to the perception of man who lives in a physical medium.

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 277.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 1211.

Man's life in the hereafter is, according to Ghose, in cause-and-effect connection with terrestrial life which determines all subsequent life. It follows that one must not sit idle or waste his time but he must live a useful life and perform useful deeds, for as you sow here you will mow in the hereafter.[1]

That is, in brief outline, the system of the philosophy of integral idealism.

In summing up his philosophical studies, Aurobindo Ghose arrived at the following conclusions:

(1) everything emerges out of Brahman, everything reverts to Brahman; the cycle is eternal;

(2) life and death are two phases of a single cycle; what happens is reincarnation of the soul;

(3) *karma*, the eternal moral law of the universe, determines the destiny of the human soul as well as the destiny of all nature;

(4) man's goal is "life divine", merging with Brahman. The path to life divine lies through cognition of the self.

Thus we see that in his solution of the fundamental question of philosophy, Aurobindo Ghose did not rise above the Vedantists' objective idealism. However, for the first two decades of the 20th century the historically progressive feature of his philosophy was that, first, he recognised the reality of the material world, and took a positive attitude to the achievements of materialist philosophy and natural science, although he believed their conclusions to be "one-sided". This instance fully confirms Engels's view that "the philosophers were by

[1] The reference is to the law of *karma* based, according to Ghose, on two principles: (1) any existence is equivalent to activity; (2) existence changes its form through activity.

no means impelled, as they thought they were, solely by the force of pure reason. On the contrary, what really pushed them forward most was the powerful and ever more rapidly onrushing progress of natural science and industry. Among the materialists this was plain on the surface, but the idealist systems also filled themselves more and more with a materialist content and attempted pantheistically to reconcile the antithesis between mind and matter."[1]

Second, Aurobindo Ghose's philosophy contained another progressive element, namely, his criticism of Indian asceticism for its neglect of the material conditions of life and for "excessive" mysticism.

2. Integral Sociology

Aurobindo Ghose's sociological views are directly linked with his philosophical vision. According to Ghose, there are two principal properties or attributes, through which the indefinite Brahman manifests itself in the phenomenal world: matter ("nature") and consciousness ("pure spirit", *atman*). These two attributes are intimately linked with one another. Each of them is an infinite series of individual (material and spiritual, respectively) objects and phenomena which, being in continuous motion, enter various combinations and form certain "aggregate states".

Nature consists of an infinite number of aggregates, the entire totality of which is divided into two main kinds, "physical" and "human". The principal

[1] Frederick Engels, "Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy", in: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 3, pp. 347-348.

and the only component of human aggregates is the individual, man as sovereign personality. Both physical and human aggregates emerge in accordance with the objective laws of nature, and "in building up her human aggregates, Nature has followed in general principle the same law that she observes in her physical aggregates".[1]

According to Ghose, the individual is the ultimate foundation of human society, the focus around which and for the sake of which all human institutions are created and exist. The family, various social organisations, nations, and other "aggregates" are all merely "a means for the greater satisfaction of the vital individual".[2] In the family, he experiences spiritual and physical pleasures. In the public organisations, there is a less intimate but broader field of endeavour for the individual and his instincts — satisfaction of emotions involved in social life, communication within a collective, joint efforts, exchange, etc. In the nation, he finds the means for satisfying even more remote feelings and interests—power, politics, etc.

Thus for Ghose, man is not a social being but rather an autonomous, independent individual regarding his life as the centre of the universe. Ghose viewed man's individual being, his material practice and thinking not as a concrete manifestation of social being but rather as a "separate existence" based on the development of his life, satisfying "his mental tendencies, emotional and vital needs and physical

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[1] Aurobindo Ghose, *The Ideal of Human Unity*, The Sri Aurobindo Library, New York 1950, p. 66.

[2] Aurobindo Ghose, "The Human Cycle", *Selected Works*, Vol. 15, All India Press, Pondicherry, 1971, p. 149.

being according to his own desire governed by his reason".[1]

From these positions, the philosopher views the entire history of human society as the history of separate individuals and their "aggregate states". In 1916-1918, he published in the *Arya* monthly a series of articles under the general title "Psychology of Social Development".[2] In the very first articles he declared himself to be a resolute opponent of the materialist view of history. Due to the advances of natural science [he wrote], particularly due to the great discoveries in the field of physics, the attempt to explain the development of human society by material factors is becoming widespread; there is even a science which is inclined to "explain everything in history and social development as much as possible by economic necessity or motive — by economy understood in its widest sense".[3] But he believed that one must see both the good and the bad sides of materialism. One could not disregard the historical fact, for instance, that the nineteenth century, the age in which materialism prevailed, was "a most powerful creative epoch of humanity".[4] Materialism substantiates its conclusions by scientific data, and "science is a right knowledge".[5] But scientific knowledge, Ghose believed, was one-sided, it was insufficient for cognition of the truth which is "on the other side". He insisted that "the truth comes most easily home to us in Religion and in Art...".[6]

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[1] *Ibid.*, p. 48.

[2] Later these articles were published in a separate volume entitled *The Human Cycle*.

[3] Aurobindo Ghose, "The Human Cycle", *Selected Works*, Vol. 15, p. 1.

[4] Aurobindo Ghose, "Evolution", *Selected Works*, Vol. 16, p. 246.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 247.

[6] Aurobindo Ghose, "The Human Cycle", Vol. 15, p. 137.

In Ghose's view, society develops from the less complicated forms of "aggregate states" to the more complicated ones (horde, tribe, race, class, state, nation, empire, and in the future, a world-union). The periods in the history of human society and the order of economic life of its aggregates change with the development of the individuals' consciousness (natural consciousness, symbolism, conventionalism, and subjectivism). The periods in the history of human society singled out by Ghose evince a great influence of Karl Lamprecht (1856-1915), a German historian of the liberal type.

The 20th century is, according to Ghose, the age of subjectivism or individualism. The highest form of the "aggregate state" is in this period the nation, for it ensures in the best way the individuals' psychical unity, consolidating the people physically and politically in defence of their interests. Moreover, the emergence of the nation is the result of the operation of the objective law of nature. For this reason all modern attempts to destroy by force or undermine the nation are stupid and futile.

Ghose believed his theory of the formation of "nation aggregates" out of individuals and the theory of the national liberation movement of these aggregates for their political freedom and economic independence to be of universal significance and valid for all the countries and peoples of the world, particularly for the oppressed countries and peoples of the East. The practical difficulty lay, however, in getting all the people to understand this theory, in getting everyone to realise that each individual, irrespective of the colour of his skin, religious convictions, or level of material well-being, has a right to live. According to the law of nature, all men are equal, for in the breast of each individual one and

the same divine fire, the *jiva*, a particle of Brahman, is burning.

As for men's actual inequality, it is the result of the imperfection of the "aggregates" (the economic, political, and other types of associations) in which the individuals so far have united to attain their personal goals. It is precisely under the conditions of the imperfect "aggregate states" that such intolerable evils emerged as oppression, racial discrimination, lack of rights, poverty, etc.

Ghose's conclusion was that the principal contradiction of human life is that between the individual and society, or aggregate. He believed that this contradiction could only be resolved if all men learnt the ideal law of social development, if each individual restructured his practical life in accordance with that law.

The essence of the ideal law of social development consisted in the following. *As regards the individual*, the law demanded that the latter must "perfect his individuality by free development from within" and, moreover, that the individual should respect and render assistance to other individuals like himself organised in certain aggregates. "His [the individual's — *V.B.*] law is to harmonise his life with the life of the social aggregate."[1] *As regards humanity:* "The law for humanity is to pursue its upward evolution [the reference is to the "spiritual evolution" towards Brahman and merging with it — *V.B.*] towards the finding and expression of the Divine in the type of mankind."[2]

It is very hard to master the ideal law. This goal can only be attained through the individual's all-

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[1] Aurobindo Ghose, "The Human Cycle", p. 63.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 64.

round development. However, the age of subjectivism is only beginning, and, apart from that, a great deal of mankind, millions of the common people are still extremely ignorant. That is why this law remains an ideal "which the imperfect human race has never yet really attained and it may be very long before it can attain to it."[1]

Thus, being an idealist, Aurobindo Ghose did not and could not understand the fact that all relations between men are based on those determined by the development of material production.

Unlike materialists, Ghose was convinced that mankind's historical development and the transition from one "aggregate state" (a less perfect one) to another (a more perfect one) is determined by the level of the individuals' consciousness; and that the higher the consciousness of the individuals, the more perfect are the forms of social relations. He thought that the principal means of the individual's all-round development was propaganda and spreading of general education rather than changes in the conditions of the society's material life, in the mode of production of material wealth. "... A rational education means necessarily three things, first, to teach men how to observe and know rightly the facts on which they have to form a judgement; secondly, to train them to think fruitfully and soundly; thirdly, to fit them to use their knowledge and their thought effectively for their own and the common good."[2]

The universal triumph of rationalism, that is, the development of individuals to the necessary level of literacy in the spirit of the requirements listed above, concludes, according to Ghose, the "age of mental subjectivism" and begins the "spiritual age". Characterisation and description of these two "ages", or "human cycles" constitute, in fact, the main content of integral sociology.

What *is* the age of mental subjectivism? As defined by Ghose, that is a period in the history of mankind when consciousness-force rises to a new and higher stage of its development in man. In the preceding period, the period of the so-called conventionalism, consciousness reveals itself and acts mostly in the form of religious dogmas, which are, essentially, conventions marked by the feature of collectiveness, whereas now it assumes the form of a mental (intellectual) ability of the individual as an independent and to a certain extent isolated personality (subject).

The age of mental subjectivism, or individualism and reason, comes at a time when "old truths" have lost their meaning in man's soul and in practical social life. If society still lives according to the "old truths and order", that comes merely by inertia, by habit, by attachment to traditional form. "The individualism of the new age is an attempt to get back from the conventionalism of belief and practice to some solid bed-rock, no matter what, of real and tangible Truth."[1]

As Ghose pointed out, the age of individualism had already come in Europe. The East was only entering it. Therefore Indians, just as the other peoples of the Orient, stuck in the routine of conventionalism, should carefully study the experiences of the Europeans, for no one could escape that path of development. "The individualistic age of Europe was in its beginning a revolt of reason, in its culmi-

[1] Aurobindo Ghose, "The Human Cycle," p. 64.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 186.

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 11.

nation a triumphal progress of physical Science. Such an evolution was historically inevitable,"[1] wrote Ghose. From these positions, he welcomed the development of natural science, although he believed that process to be merely a moment or stage in the movement of consciousness to Brahman.

He held that in the age of mental subjectivism, two elements characterise the development of consciousness: development as the formation of the individual *ego*, and as the formation of the collective *ego*. The former process takes place in the individual's organism, whereas the latter, in the social organism.[2] At this rung of the social ladder, society and the individual, in Ghose's opinion, undergo all-round development at the level of reason. The structure of the peoples' economic life changes accordingly, now being based on the private capitalist form of property.

The highest rung in the social ladder is the "spiritual age". At this stage the consciousness-force completes its evolution in the phenomenal world. The rational individual gradually becomes spiritual. Society also undergoes the same kind of metamorphosis. Spiritualised society must have a corresponding economic order, which Ghose characterised as socialism.

"A spiritualised society [wrote Ghose] would live like its spiritual individuals, not in the ego, but in the spirit, not as the collective ego, but as the collective soul. This freedom from the egoistic standpoint will be its first and most prominent characteristic."[1]

[1] Aurobindo Ghose, "The Human Cycle," pp. 11-12.

[2] "The nation of society [wrote Ghose], like the individual, has a body, an organic life, a moral and aesthetic temperament, a developing mind and a soul..." (*Ibid.*, p. 29).

Ghose wrote a series of articles on the theory of "spiritualised society".[2] His basic premise was founded on the general philosophical idea that Brahman "descends" into nature, including man's body, so that later it might return ("ascend") to itself. From this viewpoint, Ghose traces the history (the "evolution") of human society (drawing his examples from various countries of Europe and Asia) from the primitive individuals and their primitive "social aggregates" to the present day.

In the chapter "The Imperfection of Past Aggregates" the philosopher writes that there is a constant contradiction in society "between the two poles of life, the individual ... and the whole". But the objective goal of nature is to reconcile all contradictions and bring them into harmony. Therefore one of the principal tasks of each individual consists in consciously facilitating the attainment of that harmony in every way, for "the perfect society will be that which most entirely favours the perfection of the individual; the perfection of the individual will be incomplete if it does not help towards the perfect state of the social aggregate to which he belongs."[3]

Ghose points out that history has preserved for us everywhere scattered instances of this travail, instances of failure and success: "the struggle towards the aggregation of tribes among the Semitic

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 239-240.

[2] These articles were published in the *Arya* between September 1915 and July 1918 (*Arya*, Vol. II, No. 2; Vol. I, No. 12). In 1919, they were published in Madras as a separate book *The Ideal of Human Unity*.

[3] Aurobindo Ghose, *The Ideal of Human Unity*, The Sri Aurobindo Library, New York, 1950, p. 24.

nations, Jew and Arab", the failure of the city states and whole peoples. Nature has been particularly cruel to the peoples of India. "We may perhaps say that here Nature tried an experiment of unparalleled complexity and potential richness accumulating all possible difficulties in order to arrive at the most opulent result."[1] The Indian people had to make gigantic efforts to overcome the difficulties within the country. "But in the end [Ghose writes] the problem proved insoluble or, at least, was not solved and Nature had to resort to her usual *deus ex machina* denouement, the instrumentality of a foreign rule."[2]

Why does all this take place in human society? Why is the history of the Indian people so full of suffering? In Ghose's view, the reason lies in the discord between the society and the individual.

As we have already noted, Aurobindo Ghose did not share the materialist conception of history, so that the real cause of social phenomena, both internal and external for any given country, remained hidden from him. He looked for ways of solving real social contradictions in the sphere of consciousness.

Ghose conceived of mankind's movement to the ultimate goal, "a spiritualised society", as an evolution founded on the elimination of the contradictions (on "harmony") between three constant factors; individuals, communities of various sorts, and mankind. "Each seeks its own fulfilment and satisfaction but each is compelled to develop them not independently but in relation to the others."[3]

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[1] *Ibid.*, p. 26.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 178.

"A spiritualised society", according to Ghose, can and must be built only within the framework of the entire humanity. To achieve this goal all nations, as the most stable "psychical communities" of individuals, must unite themselves in a single World-State. There is the question, however, of the status of nations in that union — whether they will be provinces of a centralised World-State or organically linked and equal parts of a single whole, that is to say, whether that union of nations will be a mechanical aggregate in the shape of a World-State or "a world-union founded upon the principle of liberty and variation in a free and intelligent unity".[1] Ghose himself was inclined towards the idea of a world-union.

What are the practical ways and means of constructing such a union? First, the social interests, Ghose believed, should be brought closer together; second, the causes of the weakness and backwardness of many peoples should be eliminated; third, the force of public opinion should be used more vigorously; fourth, the "psychological forces" dividing the strong and progressive from the weak and backward should be liquidated though morally influencing the individuals; fifth and last, philosophy should be used more effectively and synthesised with religion. Philosophy, as defined by Ghose, "is the intellectual search for the fundamental truth of things; religion is the attempt to make the truth dynamic in the soul of man. They are essential to each other; a religion that is not the expression of philosophic truth, degenerates into superstition and obscurantism, and a philosophy which does not dynamise itself with the religious spirit is

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[1] *Ibid.*, p. 234.

a barren light, for it cannot get itself practiced."[1]

These are the principal propositions and ideas of integral sociology developed by Aurobindo Ghose in the first two decades of this century. Objectively speaking, it had progressive significance in India at the time — for the following reasons.

(1) Ghose endeavoured to re-orient the traditional Vedanta, making it more worldly, and linking it up with life and the practices of the national liberation struggle.

(2) Preaching men's equality on the spiritual plane, Ghose proved that the oppressed and downtrodden Indians are just as good humans as all men on earth, and that the struggle of the Indian people for freedom and independence is their natural right.

(3) Criticising the so-called conventionalism, Ghose actually fought feudalism and its ideology.

(4) He insisted that each Indian, irrespective of his qualification, must be literate.

(5) Ghose taught that all the peoples of the world must be united in free and politically and economically independent nations, and that the nations' freedom and independence is the necessary condition for social progress.

However, Ghose's subjective aspirations and the methods of their implementation were in serious contradiction.

The second period in the life and activity of Aurobindo Ghose (the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s) proved to be almost totally fruitless on the creative plane. He repeated, with modifications, the weakest points of his philosophical system, inclining more

[1] Aurobindo Ghose, "Ideals and Progress", *Selected Works*, Vol. 16, p. 314.

and more towards mysticism. His attention was taken up by the "integral Yoga", the development of the more perfect methods of self-cognition in the name of attaining Brahman.

As a political fighter, Aurobindo Ghose was no longer in the forefront of the ideological struggle. Although he reacted from time to time to the major events in the life of his country and abroad, his voice was that of an old liberal. His positions were inconsistent and vacillating. For instance, he approved of the use of force in the struggle for national independence but spoke against organised mass movements; he spoke against fascism and at the same time against communism, etc. Aurobindo Ghose's lot was not unusual in this respect: the destiny of many other liberals both in India and beyond its borders was the same.

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In 1947, India embarked upon the path of independent political development. This historical event of enormous significance affected all spheres of Indian society, including ideology. Modern Indian philosophy faced the following questions: What was philosophy's role in the revival of the country? Was Indian philosophy in its modern form (the reference is to the worldview of the ruling classes) capable of effectively serving society's progressive development? Did it need reorientation, a radical revision of the methodological positions? Which of the numerous philosophical trends (schools, systems, directions) should be given preference?[1]

[1] See the papers of the yearly sessions of the Indian Philosophical Congress.

Under these circumstances, it is a matter of interest that some philosophers endeavour to boost Aurobindo Ghose's teaching, presenting it as nothing short of the standard of social progress of modern times. Ghose is declared to be the creator of a universal system, allegedly containing all the answers to all the modern "individual and general" questions not only of the Indian people but of the entire mankind. In the words of Haridas Chaudhuri, a modern Indian philosopher, Aurobindo Ghose has given to the world a very comprehensive philosophical system and integral sociology which points to mankind the true way to attaining "integral living", that is, the highest form of terrestrial life in general.[1] These statements can only be described as groundless. Inasmuch as Aurobindo Ghose's integral philosophy and sociology are intended for all times and all peoples, they are actually inapplicable at any time and in any place.

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[1] H. Chaudhuri, *The Philosophy of Integralism or the Metaphysical Synthesis Inherent in the Teaching of Sri Aurobindo*, Sri Aurobindo Pathamandir, Calcutta, 1954, p. IV.

Chapter 3.

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

A great role in the history of Indian philosophical and sociological thought was played by Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941).

Tagore was born in Calcutta, the capital of Bengal. His grandfather and father, Dwarkanath Tagore and Debendranath Tagore, were prominent public figures in India, active in the religious reformist Brahmo Samaj movement. Rabindranath did not receive a formal higher education, but he profited a great deal by the "domestic university". Writers, artists, actors, religious and political figures were frequent guests at the Tagores'. "... The whole atmosphere of our home was permeated with the spirit of creation."[1] At a very early age Rabindranath listened to (and later participated in) talks and arguments on vital problems of art, philosophy, and politics.

In his autobiographical article "The Religion of an Artist" Tagore remarked that he was born at a great epoch when the currents of three movements had met in the life of the country: (1) one of these was aimed at reform in religion, and it was started by Rammohan Roy. "It was revolutionary... I am proud to say that my father was one of the great leaders of that movement";[2] (2) the movement

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[1] R. Tagore, *The Religion of an Artist*, Visva-Bharati Bookshop, Calcutta, 1953, p. 7.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 1.

against theology and lifelessness in Indian literature begun by Bankimchandra Chatterjee. Tagore wrote that it was a literary revolution: "Bankimchandra was brave enough to go against the orthodoxy which believed in the security of tombstones and that finality which can only belong to the lifeless. He lifted the dead weight of ponderous forms from our language and... aroused our literature from her age-long sleep";[1] (3) the national movement[2] which raised its voice in protest against "the humiliation constantly heaped upon us by people who were not oriental, and who had, especially at that time, the habit of sharply dividing the human world into the good and the bad according to the hemisphere to which they belong".[3]

Tagore's worldview was moulded first of all by the Indian reality, including those three movements. The theoretical sources of his worldview were the orthodox interpretation of the Upanisads and the Vedanta, as well as the Vaishnvite teaching of *bhakti*.[4] He also studied the works of Jean Lamarck, Charles Darwin, Thomas Huxley and other natural scientists, and these studies induced him to write a school manual on natural science, to give the Indian youth the necessary information about the modern achievements of European science.

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[1] *Ibid.*, p. 2.

[2] The reference is to the revolt of the Indian people in 1857-1859 against the British colonialists.

[3] R. Tagore, *The Religion of an Artist*, p. 2.

[4] According to this teaching, the primary reality, the efficient and material cause of all that is Vishnu, the personal god of love and mercy with the attributes of *sat* (being), *chit* (consciousness) and *ananda* (bliss). Vishnu's main quality is love and the power of joy. In his works, Tagore used the vaishnvite categories of *bhakti* (love for the deity) and joy to denote the intuitive form of knowledge.

As for the literary influences, one should first of all point to the Indian epics (*Mahabharata* and *Ramayana*), the work of Kalidasa and of the prominent 19th-century Bengali writer Bankimchandra Chaterjee.

Rabindranath Tagore's creative genius had many facets; his was a truly encyclopaedic mind of the great period of the Cultural Revival of India in the 19th and early 20th century. Following Rammohan Roy, he drove his plough deep into the soil of India, turning up the time-hardened national self-consciousness of the Indian people and doing his utmost as enlightener and philosopher, poet and prose-writer, playwright and literary critic, historian and publicist, educationalist and artist, musician and composer, actor and producer.

Tagore's entire creativity is permeated with the idea of national liberation, of the struggle for the spiritual and political liberation from the yoke of colonialism and feudal survivals.

Tagore's impact on modern India was so great that he is rightly referred to as the "creator of modern India".

Jawaharlal Nehru wrote that Tagore won respect of the nation because he was "a beacon light to all of us, ever pointing to the finer and nobler aspects of life and never allowing us to fall into the ruts which kill individuals as well as nations. Nationalism, specially when it urges us to fight for freedom, is noble and life-giving. But often it becomes a narrow creed, and limits and encompasses its votaries and makes them forget the many-sidedness of life. But Rabindranath Tagore has given to our nationalism the outlook of internationalism and has enriched it with art and music and the magic of his words, so that it has become the

full-blooded emblem of India's awakened spirit."[1]

In the 1890s Tagore wrote a series of stories expressing his sympathy with the popular masses and hatred for the oppressors. In the *Sadhana* magazine,[2] he published a number of publicistic writings on vital political questions. In his articles he appealed for greater unity between Hindus and Moslems in their struggle against their common enemy, the British colonialists.

Tagore's socio-psychological novels of the early 1900s express the idea of the inevitability and necessity of destroying the old feudal world and show the reactionary role of feudal ideology, morality in particular.

At the time of the rising national liberation movement (1905-1908), Tagore took an active part in the *swadeshi* and *swaraj* movements[3] and published the socio-political magazine *Bhandar*, where he printed his anti-colonialist articles and suggested a plan for agrarian reforms in the interests of the Indian peasant. He denounced the economic exploitation of India by Britain, and formulated his view on achieving independence through social reforms.

The cruel reprisals of the colonialists against the Indian patriots participating in the *swadeshi* and *swaraj* movements destroyed Tagore's illusions concerning the British government. For a while, he ceased his vigorous public activities and gave himself up entirely to writing.

[1] *The Golden Book of Tagore. A Homage to Rabindranath Tagore from India and the World in Celebration of His Seventieth Birthday*, The Golden Book Committee, Calcutta, 1931, p. 183.

[2] R. Tagore began publishing this magazine in 1895.

[3] *Swadeshi* — the movement for India's economic independence; *swaraj* — the movement for India's political independence.

In four years (1909-1912) he wrote a number of outstanding works: a study in the most ancient philosophical texts of the Upanisads, the drama *Raja (The King of the Dark Chamber)*, a book of verse *Gitanjali*, and the dramas *The Castle of Conservatism* and *The Post-Office*. On December 27, 1911, he spoke at a sitting of the National Congress and sang his song *Jan Gan Man Adhinayak* which became the national anthem of independent India.

Tagore's creative work was highly appreciated both in India and beyond its borders. In 1913, the Calcutta University awarded him the honorary title of Doctor of Literature, and later he received the Nobel Prize for literature.

By that time the writer became convinced that the Indian problem (the question of India's historical destiny) could only be successfully solved if corresponding changes took place in culture (that is, economy and politics) of all or at any rate most countries of the world.[1] In search of a common language with other world cultures, and to get a better idea of the basic problems of the modern times, Tagore went on a number of long travels to eastern and western countries. During his stay in the USA (1912 and 1917), he delivered a series of lectures expounding in a more or less systematic form his philosophical and socio-political views.

The historians of Indian philosophy rightly refer to Tagore as a Vedantist. Indeed, he recognised the Vedantist teaching of Brahman, the Vaishnvite doctrine of *bhakti*, etc. He often went on religious quests,

[1] Tagore wrote that it was not easy to find in Bengali a precise equivalent for the English word "civilisation". He usually translated it by the term "culture".

turning to the remote past (the Upanisads). But Tagore's historical significance as writer and thinker is not determined by those facts. As Jawaharlal Nehru correctly pointed out, that was merely a tribute to the times: "The rising middle classes were politically inclined and were not so much in search of a religion; but they wanted some cultural roots to cling on to, something that gave them assurance of their own worth, something that would reduce the sense of frustration and humiliation that foreign conquest and rule had produced. In every country with a growing nationalism there is this search apart from religion, this tendency to go to the past."[1]

Tagore's greatness is in the fact that his works reflected the moods and aspirations of millions of Indian peasants during the national liberation movement of the late 19th and early 20th century. All of Tagore's work was imbued with the spirit of democracy and patriotism, which determined the direction and development of his worldview.

For this reason his Vedantism is considerably different from what the Indian tradition refers to as the Vědanta philosophy. For instance, the traditional doctrine that the primary basis of all that is has three attributes, *sat* (being), *chit* (consciousness), and *ananda* (bliss), is, in point of fact, interpreted by Tagore somewhat materialistically or, to be more precise, in the spirit of Dayananda Sarasvati.

This *trimurti* signifies, in his words, that, first, nature and the entire world of objects and phenomena that surround us exist objectively (*sat*); second, that all the objects and phenomena of nature and the laws by which their existence is governed are knowable (*chit*); third, everything

[1] J. Nehru, *The Discovery of India*, p. 361.

that has been cognised can and must be used in the interests of the people (*ananda*). Tagore wrote: "the world is what we perceive it to be".[1] "Things are what they are,... the knowledge is one of the channels of our relation with the things outside us."[2]

In studying the phenomena of nature, Tagore insists on taking into account their mutability, fluctuation, and contradictoriness, for in the universe "we have what we call in Sanskrit dvandva, a series of opposites in creation; such as, the positive pole and the negative, the centripetal force and the centrifugal, attraction and repulsion", and Tagore notes, "these opposites do not bring confusion in the universe, but harmony".[3] The tendency towards a dialectical approach to the objects of cognition affects Tagore's understanding of the very process of cognition.

Tagore believed that in cognising the world we perceive it as a contradictory unity, for it is mutable and immutable, continuous and discrete, remote and near, etc.[4] The degree of precision in knowledge is therefore largely dependent on our position in space and time. For instance, the more distant we are from a moving object, the slower its motion will appear, so that in the end it will seem motionless. If the naked eye could see the molecules of a bit of iron, we would observe them move.

[1] R. Tagore, *Personality*, MacMillan and Co. Limited, London, 1959, p. 47.

[2] R. Tagore, *Sadhana. The Realisation of Life*, MacMillan and Co. Limited, London, 1913, p. 60.

[3] *Ibid*., p. 96.

[4] To link this view with the tradition, Tagore refers to an aphorism from the Isa-Upanisad (5): "It moves. It moves not. It is distant. It is near" (R. Tagore, *Personality*, p. 44).

As distinct from the adherents of asceticism, neo-Hinduism, and other religious and mystical Vedantist trends of the time, Tagore ascribed great significance to the study of nature and mastering its laws. Whereas the adherents of asceticism preached renunciation of all that is finite (earthly and sensual), in the name of attaining the infinite (Brahman), Tagore insisted, on the contrary, on the need for studying the objects and phenomena surrounding man (the finite).

The desire for cognising the laws of nature follows, in Tagore's words, from "the necessity we have to live, to till the soil, to gather food, to clothe ourselves, to get materials from nature".[1] The process of cognition is a reflection of the world in the human sense organs. "Knowledge is the contact of the intellect with the surrounding world." Perception is the only channel through which we obtain knowledge of nature and attain the truth.

Tagore distinguishes three modes of perception of truth in life. *The first mode* is intellectual perception: here, the sense data are given an interpretation; the latter is intrinsically contradictory. The intellect, on the one hand, perceives the truth, and on the other, tests its reliability and strength.

The second mode of perception is practical activity. Mastering the knowledge of the objects and phenomena of nature, man endeavours to employ it for his own ends.

The third mode of perception is the emotional one, or the perception of beauty. When the moment for this type of perception comes, says Tagore, intellectual perception abandons us, and there is also no calculation or secret thoughts. Man

[1] R. Tagore, *Personality*, p. 3.

is preoccupied with himself as his own house.

The essence of emotional perception lies in perceiving another person as one perceives oneself, in seeing oneself through the eyes of another. But as man develops, his desire for knowing his own self increases. That is natural. But it is not enough to cognise the "I" in one's own self only. One must also cognise oneself in others.

Thus Tagore raised, and tried to solve, the problem of the relation between empirical description of facts and cognition of law. Taken by itself, an individual fact or even a number of facts is not yet a truth, he wrote. We would learn the truth only if our intelligence penetrated the thickness of pure number and quantity, that is, if we discovered a law. For example, one may observe thousands of instances of an apple falling from a tree, but if we do not know the law of gravitation these facts will not provide us with the truth and have no other meaning for us but that an apple fell from a tree. Developing this idea in another work, Tagore wrote that when children begin to study the separate letters of the alphabet, they do not enjoy it at all, because they lose sight of the real goal of instruction. Indeed, when letters attract our attention by themselves, they tire us. They become a source of enjoyment for us only when they are combined in words and utterances and express ideas.

Tagore attributed great significance to the development of science, through which, by cognising the laws of nature, we acquire power over nature. It should be noted, however, that Tagore, affected by the traditional Vedantist division of knowledge into *vidya* and *avidya*, held an original conception of dual truth. Apart from "the truth of nature"

perceived through scientific knowledge, he recognised "the truth in our soul" attained by intuition—"perception of a soul by another soul" through joy and love (*bhakti*).

* * *

Tagore's philosophical musings were most fully expressed in aesthetics, where his deviations from idealism and fluctuation between idealism and materialism are particularly strong. Leaving aside the "general goals and tasks of unity and merging with Brahman", we shall see that Tagore recognises objective existence of nature and believes human perceptions and logical thinking to be the source (a means) of its cognition. Tagore held that art ultimately has an objective source. Nature knocks at the door of the "secret chamber" of the artist's heart, penetrates it, and is transformed in the crucible of the creative genius. "There the fire of her workshop is transformed into lamps of a festival, the noise of her factory is heard like music. The iron chain of cause and effect sounds heavily outside in nature, but in the human heart its unalloyed delight seems to sound, as it were, like the golden strings of a harp."[1]

Tagore solves the fundamental question of aesthetics, that of the relation of art to reality, from the positions of realism. He forgets, as it were, his philosophical thesis of Brahman as the ultimate cause of all that is. For him, the artistic image is a reflection of the external world ("an aspect of nature") in man's consciousness.

"Take an instance—the flower of a plant. However fine and dainty it may look, it is pressed to do a great service, and its colours and forms are all suited to its work. It must bring forth the fruit, or the continuity of plant life will be broken and the earth will be turned into a desert ere long. The colour and the smell of the flower are all for some purpose therefore; no sooner it is fertilised by the bee, and the time of its fruition arrives, than it sheds its exquisite petals and a cruel economy compels it to give up its sweet perfume. It has no time to flaunt its finery, for it is busy beyond measure...

"But when this same flower enters the heart of men its aspect of busy practicality is gone, and it becomes the very emblem of leisure and repose. The same object that is the embodiment of endless activity without is the perfect expression and peace within."[1]

The scientist and the artist deal, according to Tagore, with one and the same nature. The difference between them is that "the scientist seeks an impersonal principle of unification, which can be applied to all things. For instance, he destroys the human body which is personal in order to find out physiology, which is impersonal and general. But the artist finds out the unique, the individual, which yet is in the heart of the universal, ...he has to find out the inner concordance of that one thing with its outer surroundings of all things..."[2]

Tagore wrote no special treatises on aesthetics, but his views on this subject were more or less systematically expounded in his theory of the beautiful.

He resolutely opposes the adherents of art for art's sake who defended the thesis "The beautiful is the

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[1] R. Tagore, *Sadhana. Realisation of Life*, p. 103.

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 99, 100.

[2] R. Tagore, *Personality*, pp. 23, 24.

purpose of art." In his words, this thesis is evidence of erroneous interpretation of both the beautiful and art, which leads to lack of ideological content, formalism, and other defects in artistic creativity. Tagore believed the main drawback of the theory of art for art's sake to be a lack of the democratic spirit and neglect for man. It is man with his daily vital needs that must be the focus of the artist's attention. Art is extremely human in that "in Art, man reveals himself and not his objects. His objects have their place in books of information and science, where he has completely to conceal himself".[1] True art must help man to solve the tasks facing him and society, rather than serve the abstract idea of the beautiful. In other words, the beautiful is a means, not a goal. The view of the beautiful as the ultimate goal of art leads, in Tagore's opinion, to forgetfulness of the fact that art must serve man and the people.

The shortcoming of the classical literature of the ancient time was, as Tagore saw it, that it "was only peopled by saints and kings and heroes. It threw no light upon men who loved and suffered in obscurity".[2] The artist can only realise his true purpose if he is firmly bound with the life of the people and serves their interests.

In Tagore's opinion, the beautiful is complete correspondence of man's ideals with reality. Artistic activity must be stimulated by man's aesthetic need and a desire for perfect beauty.

Tagore believed that a happy and beautiful life could be built on earth through the efforts of the people, of the working men. He passionately appealed to artists to study harder the countenance

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[1] *Ibid.*, p. 12.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 28.

of life, instead of dreaming of paradise in heaven. "I believe [he wrote] that the vision of Paradise is to be seen in the sunlight and the green of the earth, in the beauty of the human face and the wealth of human life."

The significance of Tagore's aesthetic ideas lay, above all, in that they directed attention to earthly life, stimulating an active attitude to social affairs.

Tagore's interest in the life of man, his desire for employing his energy in the service of the Indian people conditioned the materialist trend in his creativity. However, he was extremely sensitive to any deviations from the Hinduist tradition, from the belief in Brahma (whom he personified), from *bhakti* (which in his teaching took the form of intuition), etc. Tagore's worldview and creativity are internally contradictory. Still, the democratic content increasingly made itself felt despite the Vedantist form of his creativity.

The beginning of a gradual transformation in Tagore's socio-political views coincided with the epoch when capitalism entered its highest and last stage of development—the imperialist stage. Losing its progressive character, capitalism became reactionary. The reaction became more intense on every front. The contradiction sharpened more than ever between a handful of the dominant "civilised" nations and the hundreds of millions in the colonial and dependent nations of the world, which were most inhumanly oppressed and exploited. At this time, in 1901, the "first part" of Tagore's life came to an end. It was then that he saw with his own eyes a sharp deterioration in the life of the Indian people. Before that, Tagore associated with peasants, too, and he knew all the hardships amidst which they lived. But what he saw now deeply shocked him:"As I emerged

into the stark light of bare facts, the sight of the dire poverty of the Indian masses rent my heart. Rudely shaken out of my dreams, I began to realise that perhaps in no other modern state was there such hopeless dearth of the most elementary needs of existence. And yet it was this country whose resources had fed for so long the wealth and magnificence of the British people. While I was lost in the contemplation of the great world of civilization, I could never remotedly imagine that the great ideals of humanity would end in such ruthless travesty. But today a glaring example of it stares me in the face in the utter and contemptuous indifference of a so-called civilized race to the well-being of crores of Indian people."[1]

That time marks the start of a rapid growth of democratic content in Tagore's worldview and creativity. Tagore always loved man and humanity with all his heart. Already in his earliest poems he voiced a desire to "merge with humanity". But that was abstract humanism, or love for man in general. Now, man for him was in the first place an Indian, an Indian toiler suffering under the yoke of feudalism and colonialism. Now Tagore's works endeavoured to express, in a more concrete form, the life, the ideas, and the aspirations of the Indian people. His *A Vision of India's History* (1902) and other works bear the stamp of creative imagination, of genius and shrewd insight into India's past and her mission in the present and future.

In his collection of poems called *Gitanjali* (1910), Tagore expressed his confidence that the country

[1] R. Tagore, *Crisis in Civilization,* Visva-Bharati, Calcutta, 1941, pp. 6-7.

would come awake, that the people would become free, and a social order would prevail

"...Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high;

Where knowledge is free;

Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls;

Where words come out from the depth of truth;

Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection;

Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into the dreary desert sand of dead habit;

Where the mind is led forward by thee into ever-widening thought and action —

Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake."[1]

The focal point of Tagore's social views was the question of nationalism. In point of fact, he identified the concept of nation with that of capitalism, and the concept of nationalism, with the colonialists' imperialist policy. He did not view the nation as a historically formed community of men but rather as a "special organisation" established by a definite group of adventurous elements for plundering the people both within their own country and outside it. Therefore "*the Nation is the greatest evil for the Nation* [italics supplied]", to use his own words.

Tagore insisted on drawing a distinction between "the nation" and "the people". He wrote that he had a deep love and great respect for the British people, but he insisted that government "by the Nation is neither British nor anything else". Since

[1] R. Tagore, *Gitanjali*, MacMillan and Co., Ltd., London, 1953, pp. 27-28.

India became the prey of the British, French, Portuguese, and other colonialists, Indian industry was virtually at a standstill. "The nations [i. e., the colonialists — *V. B.*] have decreed that we must remain purely an agricultural people, even forgetting the use of arms for all time to come. Thus India is being turned into so many predigested morsels of food ready to be swallowed at any moment by any nation which has even the most rudimentary set of teeth in its head."[1]

Particularly hateful to the Indian people was British colonialism. Precisely because of British colonialism, India was systematically plagued by famine, when millions of Indians died of starvation. With great indignation Tagore wrote that hungry India nourished fat England.

Tagore believed that the time was not far away when the fetters of colonialism would be thrown off. It is, of course, very difficult to break these fetters, Tagore said to his countrymen, but there is no other way to freedom.

Attaining political independence, as Tagore stressed on more than one occasion, would be a very important but by far not the main step on the road to the country's true freedom and independence. He ascribed decisive significance to economic independence, and it was in this connection that he gave this warning: Keep watch, India! Tagore's appeal for vigilance is particularly topical in this day and age, when India has won its political independence, when dozens of other nations have thrown off the fetters of colonial slavery, and when the entire colonial system has toppled under the

[1] R. Tagore, *Nationalism*, MacMillan and Co. Ltd., London, 1921, p. 126.

combined onslaught of the national liberation revolutions.

Rabindranath Tagore left behind him an enormous literary heritage: poems, stories, novels, plays, publicistic articles, school textbooks, and so on. His works touch on questions of philosophy and religion, science and natural history, language and literature, ethics and aesthetics, and many other subjects. The whole of his creativity was subordinated to one idea, the idea of the struggle of the oppressed peoples, and in the first place the peoples of India, against colonial slavery and in the name of freedom and independence. As a public figure, Tagore called himself "a builder of new society". Although he did not know what kind of society it must be, what social and state organisation it would have, there was one thing that was clear to him: that society must be built by the people and in the interests of the people.

"...If our political progress was to be real [he wrote], the underdogs of our society must be helped to become men."[1]

There are moments in the life of every man when he expresses, voluntarily or involuntarily, with utmost frankness and passionate gusto, the credo ruling his whole life, his personal convictions and the foundations of his worldview. It usually occurs under extreme or extraordinary circumstances. Something like this happened to Rabindranath Tagore on September 20, 1930, when he came to the Soviet Union. We find evidence of this in his *Letters from Russia*. The first letter begins with an exclamation: "In Russia at last!

[1] R. Tagore, *Letters from Russia*, Visva-Bharati, Calcutta, 1960, p. 19.

Whichever way I look, I am filled with wonder." The emotional "at last!" shows that the writer had awaited that moment with great excitement. He had heard and read a great deal about Russia and the October Revolution, but what he saw with his own eyes surpassed all his expectations and even his highly developed poetic imagination. What was it about the Soviet reality that delighted him? The answer to that is simple: "From top to bottom they are rousing everybody up without distinction."[1] In other words, he saw the actual historical processes wherein his long-cherished ideas about social justice were implemented.

"...Throughout the ages, civilised communities have contained groups of nameless people. They are the majority — the beasts of burden, who have no time to become men. They grow up on the leavings of society's wealth, with the least food, least clothes and least education, and they serve the rest. They toil most, yet theirs is the largest measure of indignity. At the least excuse they starve and are humiliated by their superiors. They are deprived of everything that makes life worth living. They are like a lampstand bearing the lamp of civilisation on their heads: people above receive light while they are smeared with the trickling oil.

"I had often thought about them, but came to the conclusion that there was no help for them."[2]

Here as in the whole of his creative work Rabindranath Tagore is completely frank and sincere. He admits that, despite long contemplation, he had not been able to find real ways and means for liberating the people. At that time he had apparently

[1] R. Tagore, *Letters...*, p. 1.

[2] *Ibid.*

been insufficiently familiar with the view that "rousing everybody up without distinction" and attaining social liberation is only possible through the struggle for the liquidation of private property and establishment of social ownership. Class distinctions have to be eliminated. "The abolition of classes [wrote Lenin] means placing *all* citizens on an *equal* footing with regard to the *means of production* belonging to society as a whole. It means giving all citizens *equal* opportunities of working on the publicly-owned means of production, on the publicly-owned land, at the publicly-owned factories, and so forth."[1]

Tagore did not know this theory on the question; he knew (or saw) the practical revolutionary transformations in this country, their depth and scope. "What we ourselves have been attempting to do at Sriniketan, they are doing on a superior scale all over the land."[2] Neither did the writer realise that building the foundations of scientific socialism is by far not the same thing as was attempted at Sriniketan, where it was believed that the freedom of society could only be attained through individual freedom. At the same time he understood full well that the Russian revolution was a special kind of revolution as compared to all the others that ever happened in the world's history. He wrote that he saw "the light of the mightiest sacrificial fire that has been lit in the world's history".[3] Power was in the hands of the people, the formerly oppressed people who had had no rights or future.

[1] V. I. Lenin, "A Liberal Professor on Equality", *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 146.

[2] R. Tagore, *Letters from Russia*, p. 4.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 14.

That was the whole point. That was the cause conditioning the nature and direction of the revolutionary changes. "What is called traditional clings to man in a thousand different ways... They have torn it up by its roots here: there is no fear, no hesitation in their minds. The seat of the ancient has been swept away to make room for the new... But what has astonished me most is the tremendous task that is being carried out here... I can see, that they are determined to raise a new world. They have no time to lose, because the whole world is their opponent, they must prove without delay that what they want is not wrong, that it is no fraud; a decade or two is determined to prevail against a millennium. Very small is their material strength, but the daring of their will power defies comparison."[1]

The visit to the Soviet Union marked the climax of the evolution of Tagore's socio-political views. The direction and content of that evolution was, in our opinion, very precisely characterised by Jawaharlal Nehru: "Tagore, the aristocratic artist, turned democrat with proletarian sympathies."[2]

On May 7, 1941, on the day he was 80, Tagore reviewed his life impartially, from sunrise to sundown, and expressed profound worry about the destiny not only of his own people but also of the whole mankind, having become finally and fully convinced that Europe was not destined to be the cradle of civilisation. In other words, capitalism as a civilisation had lived out its usefulness; it was incapable of ensuring humanity's progress;

[1] R. Tagore, *Letters...*, pp. 10-11.
[2] J. Nehru, *The Discovery of India*, p. 360.

decaying, it poisoned the whole atmosphere. Where was the way out, then?

Running his mental eye almost over the whole of the world, Tagore looks for the shoots of the new in the life of various peoples with which mankind's hopes for a brighter future might be linked. He sees these shoots, in the first place, in the "Soviet civilisation". Recalling his trip to the Soviet Union in 1930, Tagore wrote of the unheard-of persistence with which work on education and improving the health services was done. This civilisation, he wrote, far from disuniting the people, spreads everywhere the power of humanity. The great humanist was right: communism is the "power of humanity"; only communism ensures the establishment of friendship between peoples and the triumph of social justice, opening up the epoch of the flourishing of the material and spiritual forces of mankind.

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The philosophical and sociological thought in India at the beginning of the 20th century developed amidst acute confrontation of progressive and reactionary ideas.

The progressive trends aimed at connecting philosophy with real life, with the practice of the national liberation movement, reorienting the traditional Vedanta in such a way as to strengthen its ties with all spheres of life, private, social, and international.

But there was a serious contradiction between the progressive aspirations of the advanced thinkers, on the one hand, and the methods of their realisation, on the other. The objective laws of social develop-

ment required an all-round development of the historical initiative of the working masses and, on this basis, the struggle for the liberation from the colonial yoke, and for the revolutionary democratic changes in the country, while the philosophers appealed to each individual "to perfect himself" in order to raise the world to perfection. It was on this path that they aspired to attain political freedom and material progress of Indian society. But they regarded both freedom and progress as means for achieving "spiritual perfection" only.

All of this indicates that the bourgeois ideology of the national liberation movement had its weak points. There was a considerable gap between the desire of the popular masses to fight against the oppression and despotism of the colonialists, on the one hand, and the extremely low level of organisation and class consciousness of the masses, on the other.

The spread of Marxism-Leninism in India practically began only in the early 1920s, under the impact of the October 1917 Revolution in Russia.

Conclusion

Analysis of the progressive trends in the history of Indian philosophy of the new times shows that the development of philosophical views in India, just as in any other country, is a law-governed phenomenon ultimately conditioned by the development and changes in the economic basis of society. The well-known Marxist proposition is fully borne out here that in a class society, philosophy has always been and still remains the worldview of definite classes and social groups.

Progressive thought in India in the latter half of the 19th and early 20th century is characterised by the following features.

Direct links with the historical destiny of the country, with the search for the solution of political and economic problems, and for the ways of the country's democratic transformation (Dayananda Sarasvati, Swami Vivekananda, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Sri Aurobindo Ghose, and others).

Anticolonialism. Links between the theory and practice of the national liberation struggle and the condition of the masses (Vivekananda, Tilak).

Distinct rudiments of the ideas of petty-bourgeois Utopian socialism (Vivekananda).

The struggle between two historical tendencies, the liberal and the democratic, as an expression of two paths of the country's capitalist development, reformist and radical.

The struggle between materialism and idealism within the prevailing philosophical schools (systems). The idealist systems, in the words of Engels, acquired increasingly more materialist content and tried to reconcile, in a pantheistic fashion, the opposition of spirit and matter.

The philosophical heritage of India is extremely rich. Progressive thought springs from the depths of centuries of history. Modern Indians have a great deal to be proud of, to guard and to hold sacred.

But guarding a heritage, as Lenin said, does not at all mean being bound by that heritage.

Guarding the heritage means also relentlessly denouncing falsifiers of history such as Harry Barnes[1] or Jacques Chevalier,[2] who do everything they can to denigrate the spiritual culture of the Oriental peoples, including Indians.

Guarding the heritage also means purifying it, discarding the layers of religious mysticism and everything that is reactionary and against the people's interest in it.

Guarding the heritage means moving ahead along the path of social progress.

Of great significance are the words of Jawaharlal Nehru: Indian philosophy must descend from the heights of supernatural and metaphysical speculation to the earth, form a firm alliance with science, and serve the interests of men's practical life. "We have to get rid of that narrowing religious outlook [he

[1] *An Introduction to the History of Sociology*, Ed. by Harry Elmer Barnes, Chicago, the University of Chicago Press, 1948.

[2] Jacques Chevalier, *Histoire de la pensée*, Flammarion, Paris, 1955.

wrote], that obsession with the supernatural and metaphysical speculations, that loosening of the mind's discipline in religious ceremonial and mystical emotionalism, which come in the way of our understanding ourselves and the world. We have to come to grips with the present, this life, this world, this nature which surrounds us in its infinite variety. Some Hindus talk of going back to the Vedas; some Moslems dream of an Islamic theocracy. Idle fancies, for there is no going back to the past; there is no turning back even if this was thought desirable. There is only one-way traffic in Time."[1]

These ideas matured in the consciousness of the great Indian not only under the impact of the ripening need for reforms in the country but also due to his profound philosophical knowledge. It is a well-known fact that Nehru was influenced by the fruitful teaching of Marxism-Leninism. "A study of Marx and Lenin [he remarked] produced a powerful effect on my mind and helped me to see history and current affairs in a new light. The long chain of history and social development appeared to have some meaning, some sequence, and the future lost some of its obscurity. The practical achievements of the Soviet Union were also tremendously impressive."[2]

It is now widely recognised that Nehru's life and activities form a whole epoch in the history of India. During Nehru's lifetime, India ceased to be a colony oppressed by British imperialism and deprived of all political rights, and became a major power whose influence on the destinies of the modern world is very great.

[1] J. Nehru, *The Discovery of India*, pp. 552-553.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 29.

It will be no exaggeration to say that the problems which independent India faced in 1947 were very complicated in nature and colossal in scope. The country's economic backwardness, the downtrodden-ness and horrific poverty of the broad masses of the population, were only some of these problems. The achievements of independent India are particularly impressive when translated into the language of figures and facts. Thus, only between the years 1951 and 1961, the country's industrial output nearly doubled, and the national income rose by 42 per cent. In the years of independence, thousands of new schools and hospitals, many colleges and universities were built. Measures have been implemented to improve labour laws, social security, etc.

The work of transforming India, begun in Jawaharlal Nehru's time, is now continued. Essentially, India has only gone through the first stage of the "uncompleted revolution": political independence has been won. The second stage, the struggle for economic independence and construction of new production relations, is characterised by a sharp increase in class contradictions within the country. At a meeting of Indian-Soviet friendship in Delhi in 1980, Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi laid particular stress on this circumstance, saying that this is inevitable in the fast moving world, particularly in view of the fact that the peoples of India continue their fight under the conditions of the uncompleted revolution. Our liberation struggle, she went on to say, which differed essentially from your revolution (that is, from the October 1917 Revolution in Russia) was nevertheless a revolution, although it was peaceful and non-violent. We realised from the start that political independence would be filled with content and stable only on condition of attaining economic independence. The second stage of this uncompleted revolution, or, in other words, the struggle against economic inequality and social injustice, gives rise to discontent among influential circles and causes certain reaction.

In the face of the unfavourable conditions, Indira Gandhi then said, we have attained certain modest successes in the practical realisation of our ideas.

It is not to be doubted that India's achievements would have been incomparably greater had it not been for the stubborn resistance of the upper crust of the propertied classes opposing any socio-economic transformations in the interests of the broad masses of the town and countryside. In his time, Nehru spoke more than once on the desire of India's big business to live off the working people. In November 1963, in his speech at a session of the All-India Congress Committee at Jaipur, Nehru stated that "monopoly is the enemy of socialism" and that "to the extent it has grown during the last few years we have drifted away from the goal of socialism..."[1]

Nehru's alarm at the concentration of wealth in the hands of the few is a warning against the grave threat which monopolies growing in the country pose to India's future. The overwhelming majority of the country's population, including the democratic sections within the ruling Indian National Congress, oppose the uncontrolled development of private capital and favour the implementation of profound socio-economic reforms in the interests of the people. They champion the establishment of such

[1] *The Times of India*, November 5, 1963, p. 9.

society in India that would ensure just distribution of wealth that was and is created by the labour of the people.

The new is invincible. Social progress is not to be disrupted. The ideals of restructuring society on socialist principles are unbreakable.

We can proudly state, said Indira Gandhi, that we have not given up a single of our fundamental principles, our loyalty to the independent foreign policy and improving the standard of living of our people. Despite the difficulties and dangers, we continue our march to the brighter future.

Theory and practice demand that the difficulties and dangers on the road to a brighter future, both internal and external, should be taken into account. Imperialists cannot reconcile themselves to the strengthening independence of the newly liberated countries. They find thousands of ways and means to try and bind these countries to themselves in order to have a freer access to their natural resources and use their territory for their own strategic ends. They create critical situations in various parts of the world, grossly interfering in the internal affairs of other countries, lecturing them on how they should live and threatening them.

Recognition of the right of all countries and peoples to live the way they like was referred to by Indira Gandhi as the first necessary condition of peace. The concept of patience and coexistence was part of Indian philosophy even before it became a political conception and an urgent demand of the times. Jawaharlal Nehru said in this connection that truth is not the monopoly of any one country or people. It is too multifacetous for anyone to claim that he knows all. Each people, each country if they

seek to retain their identity should accumulate experience of their own, through trial and error, through suffering and practical activity. This is the only way to attain maturity. But if they confine themselves to mimicking others, they will never attain maturity.

As for the Soviet Union, it has invariably come out, Indira Gandhi pointed out on many occasions, in support of the national struggle of the peoples of Asia, Africa, Latin America, and of their right to implement their own policy. The cooperation between the USSR and India is a concrete example of how peoples adhering to different political ideologies and having different socio-economic systems can work for the common good and progress. Despite the difference in the social systems, Soviet-Indian relations are in the ascendant due to the strict observance of the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of each other and complete mutual respect for the specificity of the foreign policy of both states. The fruits of economic cooperation between our countries are most impressive. At present, the enterprises of the state sector built with the USSR's assistance, produce 80 per cent of India's metallurgical machinery, 33 per cent of oil products, and 40 per cent of steel. We, on our side, stressed Indira Gandhi, particularly value the aid from the Soviet Union both for its size and its many-sidedness, for it has enabled us to build heavy industry in the state sector and to strengthen India's independence. Our economic and trade exchange steadily increases both in volume and diversity. We must continually search for new ways and spheres of cooperation in order to extend our economic relations. Those who so frequently predicted that there is a limit

to the development of our cooperation proved to be false prophets.

The friendship between the Soviet Union and India is a very important element of the mighty front of solidarity of the socialist and non-aligned countries, for it binds the aggressive forces of imperialism aimed against peace, freedom, and independence of the peoples.

Modern India has enormous possibilities in the socio-economic respect, in all the spheres of material and spiritual production, and the realisation of these possibilities will largely depend on the policy and philosophy to which it will adhere. The strength and vitality of the progressive traditions of the Indian people inspire confidence that it will be a policy of peace and international cooperation, a philosophy of opposing imperialism and promoting peace, democracy, and socialism.

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